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Making Protest Matter: Bodies, Objects, and Rhetorical Assemblage in Social Justice Movements considers three historical social movements in the 20^{th} century to examine the rhetorical power of body-object assemblage in protest moments. Focused on three cases in which marginalized people sought to resist long-standing cultural narratives and create lasting cultural change, this project traces the rhetorical effects of ephemeral embodied performance and protest objects used in concert. In considering the cases of women wearing ribbons during the suffrage movement in the U.S., black bodies raising fists in the 1960s and 1970s, and queer people adopting the rainbow icon during the gay liberation movement of the later decades of the 20^{th} century, I demonstrate the influence of collectivities of bodies and objects, tracing their rhetorical power in the moment, their circulatory possibilities, and their long-standing durability as cultural change occurs. Drawing on new materialist scholarship, performance theories, and circulation studies, the analysis of ephemeral protest rhetoric in this project offers scholars in social movement studies and rhetoric models for examining how these assemblages support agency for people seeking cultural change. Given that protest and injustice continue to be with us, the study of these historical moments of protest offers a critical overview of how objects and bodies function together.

MAKING PROTEST MATTER: BODIES, OBJECTS, AND RHETORICAL

ASSEMBLAGE IN SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS

by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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Their belief in me and in a better world is at the heart of this work.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: POWER TO THE PEOPLE

This is not a moment, it's a movement. —Lin Manuel Miranda, *Hamilton*

On January 20, 2017, my friend and I listened to President Donald Trump's Inaugural Speech while driving north on I-85, headed to Washington, D.C. for an event scheduled to speak back directly to that Inauguration. After months of what had become virulent political fighting, both on the national stage and in towns across the country, women organized to gather in the nation's capital to send a message about misogyny, power, and rights, in what social scientists have called "likely the largest single-day demonstration in recorded U.S. history" (Chenoweth and Pressman). While perhaps as many as half a million people gathered in the streets of Washington, D.C. alone, hundreds of thousands more came together in other spaces, including metropolitan areas, mid-sized cities, and smaller towns across the country and the world, to make visible the political concerns and social power of women.[1] While we drove to the March, my friend and I listened to the speech, a dark rhetorical performance that leveraged cultural fear and anxiety in the service of concentrated power and nationalism. Making our way north, we

[1] Precise counts of marchers and protesters are impossible, but a number of scholars have attempted to estimate the size of the crowds. Chenoweth and Pressman offer their method for counting protesters in the *Washington Post*, conservatively estimating that between 3.2 and 5.2 million people marched in the U.S. alone, representing at least one percent of the country's population.

wondered what the next day would bring and how the collective gathering might counter the charismatic (and disturbing) rhetorical performance of this speech.

The next morning, the Metro train from suburban Maryland to the L'Enfant Plaza stop in central D.C. was filled with people, mostly women and girls, accompanied by a plethora of objects—signs, buttons, pink knitted caps. Arriving at the station, we joined a crowd brimming with energy, so many bodies in one space that we moved together in a shuffle, chants echoing off the stone of the metro station, signs held aloft, bodies eventually spilling out onto the street above into a larger crowd still. The mass of people exuding energy and a mix of love, anger, excitement, anxiety, and camaraderie, moved together into the street, finding places to post up for the program about to begin. My friends and I took a stand outside the Air & Space Museum, where we knew a collection of protestors from North Carolina planned to meet. For the next several hours, I stood cheek by jowl with people from across the country. The mass of bodies created an affective experience for me, with sights, sounds, and smells combining, creating an ebb and flow in my own anxiety about the closeness of the bodies in a tight space. Eventually, after watching the crowd respond with generosity and compassion as people needed medical care, assistance moving strollers, or simply a clear pathway to the portable toilets, I settled in to hear the ardent speeches of the (mostly) women chosen to speak to the gathering and the nation, their faces projected onto a giant screen in front of us and their voices magnified into the blocks of people gathered in the symbolic heart of our nation. In the midst of these compelling attempts at discursive protest, I found myself captivated by the bodies and objects gathered in the space as I looked around at homemade signs, buttons, hats, sashes, costumes. The colorful scene, with people representing all ages, myriad ethnicities, a gender spectrum, reflected the complexities involved in rhetorical moments of protest and embodied acts of resistance. When the march began, the crowd lurched forward slowly, each step a mere shuffle as thousands filled the streets, bumping and jostling. The energy was palpable, a mix of anger and optimism, of possibility and earnestness.

As the mass turned to proceed down 7th street, aiming to cross the Mall and join the march down Constitution Avenue, my attention fell on two women sitting on a wall, watching the group. Young and white, they embodied both the present and the past. While one donned a bright pink, homemade pussy hat popular at the march, the other wore a brown 1920s inspired coat and hat in faux fur that matched the lapels of her coat. Across her torso, she wore a white sash, declaring “Not Going Back” in black letters, an object that in its design and font hearkened back to the Suffrage Movement a century earlier. I began, then, to see the crowd around me as a rhetorical assemblage: bodies, objects, chanting, singing, movement, all working for change in ways connected to movements of the past. As the collection of bodies and objects moved through the streets, finding a bit more space on Constitution Avenue, the fact of collectivity began to take shape. Individuals would begin a chant and, in good call-and-response form, dozens would respond. Chants turned into songs. People commented on the signs and accessories of others, both homemade and mass-produced alike. Hours later, as my group made our way through the then-quieter streets back to the Metro, we saw collections of abandoned objects, gathered at various spots, hung on fences, leaned against lamp posts, detritus from an ephemeral moment which many hoped would become a lasting movement.

The 2017 Women's March joins myriad protest events in providing an example of collective citizenry gathering and acting in public spaces, seeking visibility and change. Like other events, these marches were situated in a kairotic moment in which a person in power, in this case the recently inaugurated President of the United States, had spent months using his platform to marginalize and degrade various groups of people, while focusing particular ire on women, people of color, and immigrants. That these were the groups most actively involved in planning the marches and most well-represented in the crowds I saw in Washington, D.C. is no surprise. Like many groups in history, the marchers saw the opportunity to gather, wearing protest objects and carrying signs to make a statement that would counter the offensive and derogatory assessments made by cultural powerbrokers. My own memory of the march, now three years later, includes faint recollections of the speeches by well-known people, but vivid memories of the nameless crowds adorned with various protest accessories. Recalling other moments in history, I began to think about how bodies, objects, and spaces have worked together in other contexts to amplify a message from a marginalized group. Many protest events, ephemeral and contained, continue to exert power beyond the moment, even after the bodies disperse. This power often gets concentrated around objects, which sometimes become symbols, developing their own rhetorical agency. How do protest objects come to be associated with movements? What work do objects and bodies do together in protest and social movements? How have symbols and ephemeral items contributed to the durability of a rhetorical message? In this dissertation, I consider three historical moments in the 20th century when people marginalized by long-standing cultural beliefs sought to resist those narratives and create lasting change, though change in each case may be defined differently. These cases include wearable items associated with women's suffrage, the raised fist and black power, and the rainbow flag of gay liberation, each offering a robust example for study. Specifically, my project seeks to theorize how marginalized groups enact embodied and ephemeral protest that contradicts established cultural doxa, creating the possibility of rhetorical agency as they achieve some measure of visibility and amplification for themselves, ultimately working toward durability and circulation of a message seeking change.

In considering protest and the rhetorical work it does in communities, I am invested in the idea of agency in a world dominated by the concentration of power, and I begin by turning a feminist lens on these issues. A number of rhetoric scholars inspire this work. In particular, Marilyn Cooper's "Rhetorical Agency as Emergent and Enacted" spurred me to consider how protest, including bodies, objects, spaces, and temporal boundaries, serves to support the emergent agency of collectives, particularly collectives of marginalized people. Nedra Reynolds, in her work on interruption as an element of agency for women writers argues that "[i]nterruption might become part of a tactical rhetoric for marginalized speakers and writers—those who are often interrupted routinely as well as those who do not speak or write from a single location" (59). Reynolds' view of interruption as a tactic for marginalized people applies directly to the notion of collective protest activities as a tactic for interrupting existing cultural narratives or doxa about marginalized groups. Indeed, protest is often classified in the same way as interrupting speech—as "rude behavior" (59).[2] In this way, seeing protest events and the objects that accompany them as interruptions of the routine functioning of unjust societies offers a way to classify these same rhetorical protest activities as claiming agency for that marginalized group. Given that protests have different aims in different moments, that agency, of course, may not immediately take the form of political or legal agency, but I argue that in the process of resisting dangerous or limiting doxa, a group can gain some measure of rhetorical agency, specifically aimed at taking control of cultural narratives and the legal and material marginalization those narratives contribute to. Additionally, when ephemeral protest uses actions and objects that can amplify a particular message and readily circulate it to achieve some level of durability, then that rhetorical agency can indeed become more institutionalized in the realms of law and policy.

Repeated protest action and reenactments, and their potential for driving habitual action, can aid in the development of this rhetorical agency. While I do not consider this project deeply tied to phenomenology, by considering the ways that protest objects and performances speak back to cultural doxa, my project is influenced by Sara Ahmed's notion of queer phenomenology, in that my project "emphasizes the importance of lived experience…and the role of repeated and habitual actions in shaping bodies and world"

[2] Among others, Carole Blair and Neil Michel discuss the disruptive nature of civil rights protest, calling attention to the way they "infringed upon or inconvenienced the space of the everyday" (34).

(Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* 2). I agree with rhetorical scholar Jean Bessette's desire to move toward an "understanding of normativity [that is] more nuanced, flexible, and *contextual"* (emphasis in original, 151). However, like Ahmed, I see the role of repetition and habitual understandings of people and groups as significant to our understanding of how protest actions both resist some normative understanding of groups and then take hold and become durable elements of a movement. Ahmed discusses the "habitual as a form of inheritance" (129), and in this way, the cultural narratives that activists aim to interrupt in my project have inherited a context in which those narratives define, to some degree, normativity. This context, then, helps determine the rhetorical choices activists make, both in terms of protest ephemera and embodied performances.

As I approach this work, then, from a feminist rhetorical perspective, I see my project intersecting several interdisciplinary and ongoing scholarly conversations and in taking up these topics, my project makes two primary arguments. First, I argue that wide-ranging ephemera, including both ephemeral objects and short-lived actions, created and performed by protestors and movements exert power and generate rhetorical agency in protests, specifically in ways that directly engage and often challenge long-standing narratives or cultural doxa. In order to make this argument, I consider the kairos of each protest moment, tracing dominant narratives about the marginalized group in question. I then consider the development of compelling and ultimately sticky protest objects and symbols and their role in the resistance. This leads to the second argument that arises from my project. I argue that the successful assemblage of bodies and objects in protest, while offering a measure of visibility and agency to marginalized groups, also provides an easy means for attenuation or appropriation by dominant forces as time passes and cultural discourses shift. Given the dynamic nature of social change and social movements, this appropriation is not surprising, but recognizing how marginalized groups may achieve a measure of effectiveness and then see their success usurped by powerful forces in a community can offer some clarity on the slow and sometimes stuttering pace of change.

My research, then, explores the ephemeral elements of those rhetorical actions and the means by which that ephemera and the attendant messages may become more durable and recirculated. In particular, this dissertation offers three historical cases, with a focus on three elements: (1) the protest *performance,* an embodied and ephemeral rhetorical activity aiming at a specific cultural intervention; (2) protest *objects,* including images, symbols, and wearable objects, which may be more durable than momentary performances but are often discarded or dispersed after the protest act has passed, and (3) the *preservation*, *circulation*, and *recirculation* of both performances and ephemeral objects. By examining these three elements within movements that have experienced some measure of success in achieving their goals, my study seeks to offer some illumination of the effects of an assemblage of bodies and objects in service to social change. This project intersects several ongoing scholarly conversations in the process of investigating these movements.

Materialism, Performance, and Embodiment

Influential scholarship since the last decades of the 20th century—including Foucault's assertions about power and resistance, Butler's theories of performativity and gender, and other postmodern approaches to critical theory and scholarship—has focused on upending what may be seen as the essentializing views of human experience related to Enlightenment thinking. These theories certainly inform this dissertation, as it takes on questions of social change, activist rhetoric, and embodied performance. More specifically, though, my project seeks to interrogate the relationships between bodies, objects, and temporally-bound performative protest. In this way, I am influenced by one of the most significant and provocative turns in scholarship in recent decades, that of new materialist approaches to rhetoric and its relationship to critical posthumanism. As a means of expanding the scope of rhetorical research, this turn is a productive one, as it offers significant and complex sites for considering the development of power, agency, and change.

For my project, the work of political theorist Jane Bennett and rhetorician Laurie Gries has been particularly influential. Bennett, in the significant *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, offers two important ideas for a materialist approach to social movement research. In defining thing-power, Bennett provides a specific yet productive definition: "Thing-power gestures toward the strange ability of the ordinary, man-made items to exceed their status as objects and to manifest traces of independence or aliveness, constituting the outside of our own experience" (xvi). Recognizing and seeking to understand objects as agentic in their own right is a hallmark of new materialism. For this project, though, Bennett's further discussion of assemblage is most significant. Influenced by Deleuze and Guattari, Bennett takes on the idea of assemblage as a means of exploring the dynamic, vibrant "event-space" in which "stuff happens" (23). Her definition of assemblage creates an ample foundation for my project: "Assemblages are ad hoc groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts. Assemblages are living, throbbing confederations that are able to function despite the persistent presence of energies that confound them from within" (23-24). The construct of assemblage is a productive one for my project as it offers space for the bodies, the objects, the space, the context, and the time to interact to create discrete rhetorical effects. Rather than seeing protest events or activists themselves as acting independently and individually, I aim to uncover the effects of the interplay of bodies, objects, time, and space, of creating a shift in that assemblage.

Positioning her argument in a greater critical context, including its relationship to other perspectives like the phenomenological work of Merleau-Ponty and the social criticism of Adorno and others, Bennett ultimately finds the significance of this argument as a way to consider our own actions and contributions to various assemblages in which we participate. One of the assumptions Bennett seems to make is the ongoing involvement of each of us in various assemblages, and therefore, the importance of our consciousness of the assemblages at play. She ultimately, then, argues that "the ethical responsibility of an individual human now resides in one's response to the assemblages in which one finds oneself participating" (37). Her argument also helpfully indicates the complexity in these assemblages, as identifying the origin of an event, the causes of an event, or the most important or strongest influence on an assemblage may be impossible, even as we aim to consider the rhetorical effects of these interactions. Acknowledging the intricacy of the assemblage resists the tendency of analysis to devolve to essentializing, in a way that offers a more productive analysis in the end.

Bennett, ultimately, offers an important reminder, alongside Hallenbeck and others, that post-human theory can enrich our theoretical understandings of the material and political world in which we live. Importantly, this theoretical construct can also provide rich foundation for scholarship and criticism. I am particularly connected to the way Bennett calls us to challenges our own sense of ego as we understand the broader world in which we live. The various actants involved in those contexts both complicate and illuminate the ideas of place and agency. As I consider the case studies at the heart of this project, I ask: who or what are the relevant actors involved in gaining visibility and ultimately a measure of political agency for marginalized groups?

While Bennett offers a clear focus on assemblage and the interaction between human and non-human actants for my project, other materialist scholars, like Laurie Gries, offer important frames for this project. In the preface to *Still Life with Rhetoric*, Gries turns to the significance of "thinking intuitively about and studying things in a dynamic, consequentialist sense. The last three principles—vitality, agency, and virality—articulate an ecological disposition toward things that acknowledges their vital, transformative, and often contagious characteristics" (xvi). This ecological disposition describes my orientation toward the movements at the center of my project, as I seek to make sense of the vital and dynamic elements of the contexts in which these protest acts exist. Gries also influenced this project in the way she seeks to focus on the "materiality of visual artifacts" (11). The material objects in this project range from physical objects like ribbons, sashes, and flags to the visual artifact of a performative stance—a raised fist—acted out in a temporally brief moment. While I have not employed her iconographic tracking method, Gries' approach, connecting visual rhetoric with a materialist approach, offers a model for analysis of the protest events in this project. While new materialists have taken on a variety of sites of scholarly significance, less work has turned this approach on the area of social movement or protest studies. Accordingly, this dissertation aims to bring new materialist and visual rhetorical theories to bear on historical protest events.

In this project, then, I am influenced by materialist scholarship and work that confronts questions of embodiment and performance. In all of this, I take a cultural approach, situating both the power constraints and the resistant action as contextualized in a time and place. Like Gries, who in an interview on the podcast *Rhetoricity* claimed her interest in "the deep relationality in our entanglement with things," I find myself most interested in the entanglement—the connection and implication of connection—between bodies, objects, and cultural contexts. My project seeks to find meaning in these associations, particularly as they occur in public spaces open to public scrutiny. So, while this project does not aim to fully trace the agency and rhetoricity of the protest objects themselves, I am interested in what Barnett and Boyle call "our co-belonging and co-responsibilities with things" (7). What happens when wearable objects, like ribbons and sashes, are worn in public by women seeking suffrage? How does the existing meaning of a political ribbon shift when attached to a body that exists in that space with a limited sense of agency? What happens when an object, like a rainbow, with pre-existing associations with Biblical hope and optimism, is flown by a group of people who have been associated with danger and shame? These relational entanglements are what draw me into the study of these historical moments of resistance.

Rhetorical Durability and Circulation Studies

Alongside the turn toward a materialism, circulation studies has grown as a central concern for many rhetorical scholars in recent years. This work has focused on many rhetorical sites, genres, and aims. While John Trimbur offered early work on the circulation of writing in composition, more recent work has extended this by engaging with circulation of multimodal and cultural rhetorics. Specifically, recent circulation scholarship has examined material and digital circulation, the means of circulation, the effect of circulation, methods of tracing circulation, and the effect of re-mixing (Bradshaw; Jenkins, Ford, and Green; Gries; McGreavy, Wells, McHendry, Senda-Cook; Edwards). Those focused on digital contexts, like Ridolfo and DeVoss and Edwards and Lang, offer an expanded notion of delivery to consider the fact of velocity in a technologically dynamic world. In my work exploring protest rhetoric's relationship to the creation and maintenance of culture and power, I am influenced by several aspects of this work on circulation. First, in her work analyzing rhetoric in a global context using a transnational feminist lens, Rebecca Dingo argues that "rhetoricians must look not only at static rhetorical occasions like the Beijing conference but they must examine how rhetorics travel—how rhetoric might be picked up, how rhetorics might become networked with new and different arguments, and then how rhetorical meaning might shift and change as a result of these movements" (2). Like the rhetorical events that Dingo considers, social movements involve protest events that are both temporally bounded and culturally dynamic, heightening the possibility for networked shifts in meaning. While Dingo explores the role of gender mainstreaming in a transnational context, attending to how rhetorics travel is central to the question of how ephemeral protest objects and performances gain durability. Of course, part of this durability is the result of both activists' decisions to repeat or reenact protest events and public responses to the protest, as media outlets report on the protest and the reporting becomes part of the historical record. Additionally, my project considers the ways in which other individuals and groups pick up those objects and performances, repeat them, and ultimately "shift and change" their meanings along the way.

In this way, this dissertation aims to consider the circulation of ephemeral objects and performances as what Gries and Brooke call "an important constitutive, cultural-rhetorical process" (4). As material objects associated with these protest moments circulate, they gain momentum and additional meaning, creating a more expansive sense of the movement. While the objects themselves (a ribbon, a fist button, a flag) begin as material objects situated in particular spaces, their circulation through other spaces, both material and digital, amplifies the message of the movement and can, I argue, offer a greater sense of agency to individuals and groups previously marginalized by a cultural doxa that these objects interrupt. Simultaneously, the ease with which material (and digital) rhetorical protest objects and symbols may circulate also presents opportunities for dominant forces, particularly neo-liberal economic forces, to capitalize on the popularity and subvert those objects for their own gain. We see a similar process in Jenny Edbauer's "Unframing Models of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situations to Rhetorical Ecologies" when adopting the "Keep Austin Weird" campaign became "quasi-civic duty" (16), ironically normalizing weirdness for economic gain. My project, with its multi-protest focus, seeks to theorize how durability and circulation of protest objects and performances support a shift in the culture. By considering the breadth of circulation possibilities, my work intersects in this way with the vision of circulation work as part of mobility studies, as my project works to demonstrate "how bodies, artifacts, words, pictures, and other things flow within and across cultures to affect meaningful change" (Gries and Brooke 7). The circulation of protest objects and embodied protest performances generate durability for rhetorical performances of protest that were initially conceived of as ephemeral. The implications of this circulation prove both beneficial to and sometimes a threat to the movement in which they originate. In this way, tracing the circulation of this rhetoric can illuminate both the change effected by these movements and the limitations on change that often appear.

Choosing Cases and a Lens

As a scholar, I have been deeply influenced by feminist approaches to critical work, not just in terms of the lens I bring to the work, but also in terms of my methodological approach. As such, I began this project with a recognition that studying protest by marginalized peoples is fraught. As a young white woman growing up in Appalachian East Tennessee in a town where the divides of race and class were not only theoretical, but also geographical, I have witnessed and sometimes experienced the inequities of society. In fact, it is certainly a result of my upbringing and the visibility of suffering and injustice around me, that I have long been intrigued by the study of social change and protest. However, in the scholarly work of studying marginalization, I must begin with an acknowledgement of my own privilege. As a first-generation, educated, cis-gendered, white woman, I have been on the favored side of many cultural disputes. I turn to the work of examining protest, then, with a clear recognition of my privilege and limitation and a commitment to feminist rhetorical practices. I am particularly influenced by the call of Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa Kirsch, reminding myself "to learn how to listen more carefully to the voices (and texts) that [I] study, to critique [my] analytical assumptions and frames, to critique guiding questions reflectively and reflexively" (Royster and Kirsch 14). Part of this process, for me, has been working to engage primary documents from activists and members of the movements I am investigating, as well as aiming to cite scholars whose own identities offer them a clearer, often first-hand, experience of the circumstances that these groups were protesting. Though challenges exist in accessing primary documents, where possible, I have aimed to consider first the work of people at the center of the issues at hand.

Because the work at the heart of my project is interpretive, as I trace the uptake of iconic protest ephemera, the influence of feminist scholars also requires that I engage this work with what Royster and Kirsch name a critical imagination and strategic contemplation. As I have gathered material for my study, including delving into archives, both digital and material, I have taken time to acknowledge the challenges of doing this work. The nature of ephemeral objects is that they are often discarded rather than collected. Archives, then, are imperfect. For instance, in looking for examples of suffrage ribbons crafted and worn by women in the early 20th centuries, I have had to consider the reasons that archival examples are diffuse. Or, in looking through collections of LGBTQ movement ephemeral, I must think through why some objects, like programs and advertisements, have been retained. Both the disparate nature of texts and materials for this study and the ways in which cultural marginalization continues, creating challenges to accessing the full story via documents and collections that are likely to be influenced by the same inequities that created the need for collective activism in the first place, require that I tread carefully when offering interpretations, leaning on a variety of sources, both archival and in media reports, as neither alone will provide sufficient material.

So, in beginning a study of the relationships between ephemeral protests, bodies, and things, my first recognition, which is of course obvious, is that the number of movements that could be studied is vast. Even in confining a study to the United States, I recognize the presence of movements focused on rights, justice, or equality from a variety of subject positions and orientations, including workers' rights, Indigenous rights, disability rights, and many others. In choosing cases to consider, I recognized the significance of three movements focused on different identity groups with a history of marginalization in the United States: women, Black people, and members of the

LGBTQ+ community. While other groups certainly have experienced bigotry and a limitation of rights, these three movements have established histories, including a store of public documentation, distinct events and activities, and identifiable protest memorabilia and ephemera available for study. While this study, then, focuses on three distinct movements and events, my focus is clearly not exhaustive of the question of the rhetorical relationships of protestors and protest objects. Rather, my hope is that these cases may offer a set of examples from which to begin to consider these rhetorical tactics and effects.

For each of these case studies, my approach was similar: I began with a study of the origins of the objects or symbols to be considered as a means of orienting myself to the contexts within which these bodies and objects coexisted. For each case, this work included a broad set of historical readings, both primary and secondary, and archival searches for earliest use of the items in question. Having chosen my focus for each movement, I then set to explore archives, primarily digital archives, to find not only examples of the objects themselves, but also discussions of the objects among performers and members of the movement as well as references to these objects in the broader public sphere. These searches led to political texts, media reports, and internal texts related to the movements themselves. This work, while productive, also functioned to remind me of the imperfect nature of this work, in that none of this analysis can be argued as definitive for such broad and varied movements. However, these moments in each movement can be instructive about the rhetoricity of these actions, bodies, and objects functioning in varied historical and political contexts. What objects did activists use in their protests and why? How did the larger public respond to these choices, and what do these responses tell me? Which objects tend to recur with various bodies in the movement, and how do secondary materials reflect the significance of those objects to the movement? It is my hope that this analysis might provide some broad understandings of the ways that marginalized groups use (or must use) their bodies in relationship with ephemera to create the possibility of visibility and ultimately agency in the societies in which they are marginalized.

Chapter Outlines

In Chapter 2, "Wearing as a Feminist Rhetorical Act: Bodies and Wearable Ephemera," I turn my focus to the Women's Suffrage movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States. In considering the attempt women made to gain access to the right to vote, this chapter examines the way activists of the early 20th century responded to prevalent notions of separate spheres and the popular angel of the house image as constraining doxa for women. These women subverted the popular notion of women as suited only to domestic, family tasks by publicly protesting in support of women's suffrage. In this way, the chapter leans on Lindal Buchanan's scholarship on delivery, seeking specifically to consider *wearing* as a kind of delivery, a "socially situated public performance" (4). Considering the social context of late 19th-century United States, in which a narrow view of acceptable performances by women in public spaces predominated, also offers me the possibility of seeing collective wearing as a "means of coming to public voice in resistant settings" (9).

While the suffrage movement was long and diffuse, with organizations and individuals operating in states across the country, two symbols—the ribbon and the sash—unified the national movement. This chapter, then, considers the creation and design of these items and their popularity in the movement. While many of these ribbons, ephemeral as they were, have been lost to history, a number of examples exist in various archives, and in an analysis of these, a sense of the collectivity of these women can be deduced. Having considered the development of the ribbons and sashes, the chapter then analyzes the rhetorical effect of these items at a significant public protest event, the 1913 March on Washington, by examining photographic images of the day, political cartoons associated with the event, and some public response to the event.

Chapter 3**, "**Fists and Figures: Performing Blackness, Citizenship, and Resistance" considers ephemeral and embodied protest related to race in the United States. Scholars have long studied the public events of the Civil Rights Movements, from boycotts and sit-ins to marches and speeches. This chapter focuses on the protest by American athletes at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics as a means to consider how time and place may amplify embodied protest performances, leading ultimately to the powerful and lasting symbol of the fist. Staged in response to the economic and social inequality faced by black people in the United States, this embodied protest by Tommie Smith and John Carlos, specifically the raised, clenched fist, created an indelible image that persisted beyond that particular moment. The action suggested an icon, adopted by the Black Power movement as a symbol of the strength and solidarity of the movement for racial equality in American culture.

Using archival objects and photography, this chapter then traces how, as an easily reproducible image, the fist symbol became the primary visual emblem of the Black Power Movement in the 1970s, finding its way onto buttons, clothing, protest signs, and other ephemera, replicated in both image and performance, as celebrities and activists alike took the stance as a way to align themselves with the social movement for racial justice for Blacks in the United States. In this way, as the fist moves from performance to materiality, it becomes an example of Fred Moten's assertion that the "history of blackness is testament to the fact that objects can and do resist" (1).

Looking at more recent public writing surrounding the 1968 event, including retrospective accounts and art installations, the chapter also takes up the question of durability and circulation by examining public memory related to protest events. As the fist icon has moved further from the bodies, time, and space of that 1968 event, a radical act performed by black men has been appropriated by various economic and political forces and adopted into a wider range of resistance movements. That appropriation has worked to create intersectional coalition and allyship in some cases, and it has worked in opposition to racial justice in others, demonstrating the importance of understanding how icons circulate in a dynamic rhetorical ecology.

The third case, discussed in Chapter 4, "Visibility and Pride: Bodies on Parade," examines the development of the Pride Flag as a part of the Gay Liberation Movement of the 1970s. In order to understand the kairotic nature of the development of the pride flag, this chapter begins with an exploration of the long-held national fear of and disdain for the gay community, specifically how harassment and ostracization of gay men and lesbian women was reified by Executive Order 10450 in 1953. This document laid the groundwork for the Lavender Scare, during which hundreds of federal employees were forced to testify for a Congressional Panel before ultimately losing their jobs due to the belief that they threatened national security. The historical context of decades of cultural and legal marginalization illustrates the longstanding narrative of fear and distrust, against which lesbian women and gay men, and other queer and trans community members, pushed back during the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969.

To explore how the rainbow flag resists a longstanding cultural doxa associating queer desires with perversity, the chapter then considers how the call for political and social reform led artist and activist Gilbert Baker to create a flag striped with eight colors of the rainbow in 1978 for the San Francisco Pride Parade, with an eye toward crafting a story of hope and positivity for the gay community. This flag offered a vibrant and vivid alternative to the doxa of shame and perversity, creating an opportunity for visibility sorely needed by a community closeted by culture and law for so long. This flag, along with the queer bodies that carried, waved, and wore it, contributed to cultural changes that opened a space for the development of the colorful, joyful exuberance so closely associated with the Pride Movement today. The chapter ends with a look at how the rainbow flag has been co-opted and commodified in ways that both support and weaken the ongoing movement for LGBTQ rights and freedoms. This case, then, calls into question the rhetorical effectiveness of retaining this object as a primary identifying symbol of the ongoing work for LGBTQ rights.

While each chapter focuses on a distinct movement and case, I identify connections between the tactics and events within each of these protest movements, along with patterns in the rhetorical effects in each context. Consequently, in each of these chapters, my goal is to raise questions about what these bodies and objects can do and how the relationships between bodies and protest objects function rhetorically. In Chapter 5, “Implications and Possibilities,” I suggest that the study of ephemeral protest assemblages may offer new insights into what protest movements can do. My project, then, aims to use these cases to illustrate significant rhetorical functions specifically related to delivery and amplification, while also considering circulation implications that both support and disrupt protest activities. Protest will likely always be with us, as the nature of human society includes ongoing disparities and disagreements about the nature of justice. In a world in which marginalized groups continue to seek inclusion, justice, and agency, the study of these historical moments of protest may offer both a primer and a warning about how objects and bodies function together.

CHAPTER II

WEARING AS A FEMINIST RHETORICAL ACT: BODIES AND WEARABLE EPHEMERA

> If particular care and attention is not paid to the Laidies we are determined to foment a Rebelion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation. –Abigail Adams, to her husband John Adams, 31 March 1776

> Is the needle and the kitchen sufficient to employ the operations of a soul thus organized? I should conceive not. –Judith Sargent Murray, 1790

> Today the suffrage color is more appropriate than ever, since, it may well stand for the golden dawn of equal suffrage that is now breaking over all the world. —A.S.B. in *The Women's Journal*, 16 June 1917

Abigail Adams wrote to her husband, John, on March 31, 1776, offering something of a warning to him of the implication of concentrating power in the hands of men as those men crafted the foundations of the country. Having claimed that "all Men would be tyrants if they could" in this correspondence, Mrs. Adams encouraged her husband to side with "Men of Sense in all Ages [who] abhor these customs which treat [women] as the vassals of your Sex," threatening a rebellion if women were not considered and represented.[3]

[3] I rely here on the digital transcription of Abigail Adams' letter to John Adams as provided by the Massachusetts Historical Society at http://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/view?id=AFC01d244.

Often noted as one of the earliest supporters of women's rights, Abigail Adams, of course, was not alone in the 18^{th} century; plenty of other women called attention to the challenges of gender norms, sexism, and the resulting lack of direct influence women had in the civic life of the young country. While founding documents narrowly focused on the rights of land-owning white men, white women consistently worked to achieve political, economic, and cultural freedom in line with those powerful men. Over the next century, white women continued to work for their own liberation from the narrow constructs of a society that situated them as fundamentally domestic beings, best suited to a life of cooking, sewing, and child-rearing, with limited access to the civic or political life of the United States.

By 1913, several decades into the movement to gain the vote for women, tactics had shifted. For decades, national and local leaders had emerged as women worked to achieve voting rights in various states around the country. Conventions, meetings, and local actions had resulted in limited effect, so a larger-scale protest was planned. After significant planning, on March 3, 1913, nearly 5000 suffragists marched and rode floats through the streets of D.C., wearing sashes and ribbons and carrying banners, embodying a rights movement while thousands of witnesses, many in town for the inauguration of President Wilson scheduled for the next day, looked on. The bodies in the streets that day enacted what Marilyn Cooper calls an "emergent agency" that stemmed not only from the presence of so many individuals in the same space, but also the *ways* those bodies existed in that space in that moment. Embodied actions, accessories, and in some ways the very bodies themselves challenged traditional discourse about both women's bodies and women's roles in U. S. society. In an attempt to consider how first-wave feminists enacted an emergent agency by confronting and transgressing traditional discourses about women's bodies, this chapter will examine how women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used their bodies collectively and in concert with ephemeral protest objects—especially ribbons and sashes—to become visible as agents of change, delivering an amplified collaborative message as part of what would become a powerful historical movement.

What More Can We Learn from Suffrage?

This chapter joins a robust and varied body of scholarship related to women's suffrage in the United States. Feminist rhetorical scholars and historians have long understood the importance of studying the events, politics, and rhetorics of the nineteenth century both as a means to recount and reclaim histories that overlooked women and potentially to forecast ways that women continued to contribute to national and cultural discourses into the twentieth century. As Cheryl Glenn asserts, feminist historiography provides scholars the opportunity "to consider questions of knowledge…ethics…and power" (389) in order to complicate and challenge histories that have rendered women's activities (political, rhetorical, and cultural) either invisible or minimal. Though collaboration and collective meaning-making and action stand as a hallmark of feminist principles today, scholarship on first-wave feminism often focuses on the work of individuals or the collaboration of pairs or small groups of women. Indeed, for many, thepublic work of these individual women constitutes the rhetorical history of the suffragist movement.

Certainly, in the last half century, significant feminist historiography has focused on the rhetorical and political work of a number of first-wave leaders, including well-known women like Alice Paul, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Ida B. Wells, and other less frequently studied women like Sarah Grimke and Anjelica Grimke Weld.[4] Of course, many rhetorical studies have been done on leaders and other significant members of the movement. Certainly, segments of Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, *Volume 1* (1989), Andrea Lunsford's *Reclaiming Rhetorica* (1995), and other important texts offer significant scholarship on the rhetoric of suffragists, situating women's rhetoric as undervalued in its historical moment and often overlooked in traditional rhetorical scholarship. Other scholars have worked to recover and publish the primary texts produced by various women rhetors in the Suffrage Movement. Published in 2011, Mary Chapman and Angela Mills' *Treacherous Texts: An Anthology of Suffrage Literature, 1846-1946*, gathers texts by both the more well-known women rhetors and a number of anonymous texts. Additionally, *Available Means*, edited by Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald highlights the rhetoric of a number of nineteenth-century women, including many listed above. However, like the others mentioned here, the focus in all of these essential texts is discursive, with studies of speeches, letters, and other verbal rhetoric at

[4] Scholarship focused on nineteenth-century women's rhetoric has a long bibliography. In addition to the texts discussed here, I would point to the work of Belinda Stillion Southard, Kristin Poirot, and Jacqueline Jones Royster, among others, as important examples of work that examines the rhetorical work of individual women leaders and organizations in the history of women's suffrage as of particular significance.

the center of much scholarship.[5] These studies of the rhetorical work of individual women offer a great deal to the project of feminist historiography, including providing visibility for previously unknown women rhetors and offering important critical perspectives on their work.

In addition to analysis and study of written and spoken texts, interdisciplinary scholars consider other elements of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century life, including material and visual culture. However, in much of the literature that does focus on material and visual texts, including *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine (*1996) or *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign 1907-1914* (1988), the focus is not on the rhetorical effects of this material work, but rather on the merging of material craft and visual culture and political work. Importantly, more recent texts, like Sarah Hallenbeck's *Claiming the Bicycle*, have taken up the project of looking at rhetorical agency and collective performance as it relates to material culture in the nineteenth century. In her work, Hallenbeck considers the interplay between women riding bicycles and persistent nineteenth century gender norms, both those associated with bicycles and not. She concludes that "[a]s the rhetorical-material network of 1890s bicycle culture…expanded, so too did the grid of possibility on which riders plotted their performances of gender. And as it did, these women came to understand themselves as potential agents of cultural change" (168). In many ways, Hallenbeck's project informs my approach here, as I seek to consider the inherently rhetorical nature of material and

[5] Lindal Buchanan's *Regendering Delivery* and Carol Mattingly's *Appropriate[ing] Dress* are notable exceptions to the focus on discursive rhetoric, and I will turn to those texts later in this chapter.

visual rhetoric (in the form of ribbons and sashes) when embodied and performed by women supporting the suffrage movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Less work has been done to consider the rhetorical contributions of the masses of women, a collectivity, including how those women's bodies functioned rhetorically to perform the rhetorical canon of delivery and to amplify the rhetoric of the movement for suffrage. Specifically, even as scholarly interest in leaders of the suffrage movement has increased, and expanded to include some lesser known figures, less attention has been paid to the masses of women who acted publicly to amplify the voices of the leaders, delivering alongside those leaders the message of the movement. Those women were less well known, anonymous even, but I aim to consider their contributions to the movement, arguably as important as the more well-known leadership. These contributions include the public subversion of culturally-accepted means of delivery of rhetorical messages and attempts to amplify movement rhetoric and contribute to the circulation of the movement's message. Informed by the compelling scholarship on gender and the canon of delivery offered by Lindal Buchanan in *Regendering Delivery* (2005), this chapter considers the rhetorical significance of suffragists' bodies acting in concert, both in various locations around the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and specifically at the 1913 Suffrage March in Washington, D.C..

While the rhetorical effect of the masses of women gathering in cities across the country is significant, this chapter aims to consider the additional rhetorical effect represented by the wearing of identifiable adornments. Consequently, in considering the rhetorical effects of the bodies and the material objects in concert, I examine *wearing* as a rhetorical act. Like feminist historiography, the study of wearables as rhetoric is not new. To be sure, recent scholarship, evidenced by the 2016 special issue of *RSQ,* Pederson's *Ready to Wear: A Rhetoric of Wearable Computers and Reality-Shifting Media*, along with numerous other publications, has turned to the examination of wearable technological devices as rhetorical, considering various implications of such wearable devices as they relate to data collection and embodiment in particular. This turn in rhetorical studies signals a growing interest in the increasing use of wearable technology, largely focusing on, as Gouge and Jones state in the introduction to the special issue of *RSQ*, "technologies, electronic or otherwise, whose primary functionality requires that they be connected to bodies" (201). In much of this scholarship, important questions are being raised, including how the act of wearing intersects with and influences rhetorical choices made by individuals or groups. For instance, Jason Kalin and Jordan Frith, in their article focused on memory, embodied space, and place envision a "rhetoric of wearables" as offering "a conceptual lens through which to analyze the extent to which these technologies become embodied practices, habits, affects, and memories constituting our continued encounter with reality" (224). This suggestion that wearables create shifts in our understanding of spaces, activities, and interactions is a useful lens for my study of first-wave feminist protest wearables.

I argue that while this current line of research related to wearable technology focuses on significant questions for our field, *historicizing* the notion of wearing as rhetorical offers a productive way to investigate the act of wearing apart from the influence of the digital and data implications of wearable technologies. To that end, I consider how the wearing of ephemeral objects, namely ribbons and sashes, function as rhetorical acts, with a particular focus on these acts as performance of the rhetorical canon of delivery. In addition to considering *wearing* as a form of rhetorical delivery, I also consider *wearing* as a mode of amplification and circulation in a pre-digital historical movement. In attempting to consider the intersection of embodiment, wearing, and rhetorical agency for politically marginalized women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this chapter begins by establishing some of the elements of the dominant doxa about women, namely their confinement to domestic spheres and limitations on the possibility of their becoming rhetors, before considering how the wearing of objects in the public sphere functioned as a political act for individuals and as a collective amplification for a movement.

Gender, the Body, and Rhetoric

Consideration of the ways women resisted or subverted the constraints on their public and political lives in the United States during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries requires an examination of the those constraints, including how women were isolated from rhetorical activity as a consequence of living in a culture with highly constrained social norms and material regulations governing women's lives. Of course, historians, rhetoricians, and other scholars, particularly feminist scholars, have established the long history of discourses reflecting ideologies about gender and the body. In this chapter, I do not aim to revise the understanding of the ways women resisted these constraints in their work toward suffrage. Instead, I aim to expand our understanding of this resistance. Perhaps one of the most significant challenges for historiography, as Glenn suggests in "Truth, Lies, and Method: Revisiting Feminist Historiography," resides in the balance between the urge to respond to "intellectual and ethical questions (of evidence, power, and politics) at the same time that we resist received notions of both history and writing history" (388). Just as Glenn suggests that her work to historicize women's narratives seeks "to investigate a number of deeply contextualized narratives in an attempt to bring a fuller, richer—different—picture into focus" (388), I aim to offer a more expansive picture of women's protest activities related to suffrage in the United States. In order to situate these embodied protest activities in the context of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I trace a few of the origins of the gendered constraints on women's bodies and rhetorical activities in the Western tradition and U.S. history.

While the nineteenth century may have seen a significant concentration of these gendered perceptions, rhetorical and historical scholars remind us that these beliefs have a much older origin. Unsurprisingly, many foundational beliefs about the nature and role of women have origins in the traditions and texts of the ancient world. Cheryl Glenn reminds us that "the dominant ideology of most of the ancient world offered women no place in public discourse" (*Rhetoric Retold* 19). In the context of ancient Greek history, as Western rhetoric and rhetorical practice was developing, women were largely excluded from that practice. Though feminist scholars like Glenn have worked to recover the exceptions, the dominant expectation constructed the realm of rhetoric as one designed for men, largely founded in a belief about the natures of men and women. For example, though some disagreement exists about the extent to which Aristotle's *Politics* directly suggests that women were subordinate, the discussion of the difference in the virtue available to men, women, and slaves in Book I of *Politics* suggests that women, while not seen as on the level of slaves, were to be seen as separate from men, with men in the superior position. While he sees women as perhaps having access to virtue, it is a different virtue than that available to men. He asserts "Clearly, then, moral virtue belongs to all of them; but the temperance of a man and of a woman, or the courage and justice of a man and of a woman, are not, as Socrates maintained, the same; the courage of a man is shown in commanding, of a woman in obeying" (Part XII, Book 1). While considering the importance of political action of men in the life and flourishing of the polis and the rule of the household as part of a man's duty and virtue, Aristotle offers a separate expectation for women, one that primarily sees their importance in their subordination. Of course, as Glenn argues, the "universally subordinate evaluation of women in relation to men has provided the tautology that women were closed out of the rhetorical tradition only because they were women" (*Rhetoric Retold*, 12). In their distance from the rhetorical tradition, of course, women have also been kept from the political and public arenas, reinforcing these ancient dogmas.

Alongside what Aristotle sees as their limited capacity for reason, which would preclude them from political participation, women were expected to tend to the daily running of the household, to manage and care for the children and slaves and that which the men provided. Thus, the gendering of the activities in both political and domestic spaces can be seen as establishing a set of gender expectations that would persist for centuries, laying the groundwork for the gendering of modern Western democracies. While Glenn, Jarratt, and other scholars have offered important recovery work to call our attention to ancient women rhetors like Aspasia and Sappho, the fact remains that these women were the exceptions in a world that largely expected their silence. That silence was accompanied, of course, by an isolation from the activities of the polis, since "women had little contact with males either before or after marriage, not even with their husbands, who were often selected for them by their fathers….women were subordinated to the *oikos*, while men remained in the polis" (Glenn, *Rhetoric Retold* 23). Glenn, in fact, focuses her discussion of Sappho and the women around her as working toward the establishment and functioning of a separate space in which women could escape the male-dominated space of political and civic institutions. In this way, the exceptions of women rhetors in the ancient world prove the rule: women and men were consigned to separate spheres. This expectation that women would be sidelined in cultural and political spheres persists, of course, into the modern world. Consequently, as Thomas Jefferson and his colleagues created the guiding principles of a new nation, the discourse of gender finds its way into those documents, asserting that "all men are created equal" and any number of other gendered statements outlining the idealistic goals and rights enumerated in the founding documents of the United States.

While the founding documents of the United States, including the eighteenth-century Jeffersonian truism that "all men are created equal," remind us of the nature of gender roles pervasive the Western tradition, perhaps one of the most significant moments in an historical consideration of gender roles can be found in the nineteenth century, the context in which suffrage for women began to gain traction. Important Western thinkers in both the U.S. and the UK held to notions of separate spheres for men and women that both reflected cultural legacies and laid the foundation for ongoing perceptions of men and women as fundamentally different. For instance, we see the lingering of this paradigm in the nineteenth century as John Ruskin pronounces the spheres of men and women:

> The man, in his rough work in open world, must encounter all peril and trial….But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of error or offence. This is the true nature of home—it is the place of Peace, the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division…this, then, I believe to be, --will you not admit it to be, the woman's true place and power. (Ruskin 158-159)

Reflecting the "angel in the house" trope that has lingered for generations, Ruskin's divided sense of authority and control reflects the classical idea, reaffirming the discourse that women have a place, a space where their bodies belong, thrive, and exert a sense of power. These gendered notions of space and spheres, traceable from classical texts through nineteenth century and into the twenty-first century, define for Western cultures, at least, a sense of where it is appropriate for one to live and to act. This ideology separates the world into male and female spheres, public and private, creating the context within which a movement to extend rights, particularly voting rights, grew.

The gendered nature of separate spheres ideology and its effect on individuals and groups living in that ideology is reflected in a good deal of twentieth and twenty-first century critical scholarship in a variety of disciplines, including Amy Kaplan's "Manifest Domesticity" and Linda Kerber's "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History." In geography and spatial studies, scholarship including Jess Enoch's "A Woman's Place is in the School: Rhetorics of Gendered Space in Nineteenth-Century America" and Roxanne Mountford's "On Gender and Rhetorical Space" consider the intersection of separate sphere ideology and institutional and spatial relationships. Of course, scholarship less interested in gendered dynamics continue to focus on the implications of bodily separation. Foucault, for instance, has established that "discipline proceeds from the distribution of individuals in space" (141). While Foucault here considers the ways institutions confine and direct the action of bodies in spaces, we may also consider the social confinement of bodies in spaces related to gender and social norms. With the tradition of women being socially confined to home and private spaces, a movement aiming to encourage women to participate in the public, civic life of the community would simultaneously resist this construct and require a variety of tactics from activists, including both embodied actions and the knowledge-production necessary to create and sustain a Suffrage Movement.

In fact, while these deep-rooted notions of women's space have clear implications for their behavior and civic engagement, the influence of Aristotle's ideas about men and the dichotomies that result from Aristotle's thinking also influenced epistemologies beyond the discourse of virtue and spheres. While Aristotle's influence helps structure gendered spatial boundaries in the ancient world, scholars such as Lorraine Code suggest that this way of thinking also, and importantly, contributed to the gendered dimensions of knowledge-production itself. Of course, even in the 21st century, we can see that though cultural boundaries between men and women have shifted over time, gendered notions of knowledge production persist. Given the way dichotomized thinking can "posit exclusionary constructs, not complementary or interdependent ones" (Code 29), a culture centered on men, like that of the United States in the nineteenth century, consigns women to the status of "not-men," not fully engaged in the life of the polis in the way that men were. Men are designated the creators of knowledge, and the attendant emphasis on rational individuality constructs men as the origin and women somewhere along the periphery. This fundamental belief in the supremacy of male thinking creates additional challenges for women aiming to participate in public life. While cultural institutions and social roles may shift over time, engrained notions of who can think and create knowledge may have more persistent implications for the discourse around women, women's roles, and ultimately, women's bodies.

Significantly, philosopher Susan Bordo notes the gendered duality of the Western tradition of the body/mind split and its implication in modern life when she reminds us that men were traditionally associated with the mind, reason, logic, and therefore control and ultimately power. This association is certainly present in much of classical rhetoric. Quintilian's assertion that the perfect orator is a "good man speaking well" establishes early a narrow path for the development of a rhetorician. Additionally, as noted previously, Aristotle's focus on logic and reason, his assertion of normative values associated with Greek arête and masculine citizenship, remind both his contemporaries and large swaths of the contemporary academy that the qualities associated with reason are also gendered. Bordo reminds us, then, that the category of “male” has long been associated with centrality, logic, and the mind. An additional implication of this association is the expectation that public life, a life engaged and concerned with public affairs, community interests, and governance, is the purview of men. If one must be a citizen, a landowner, and ultimately a man to engage in public oratory, expectations for public space develop, seeing those spaces as dedicated to the functioning of men.

Extending beyond concerns with the cognitive and intellectual, this set of tightly bound gendered associations also has implications for cultural beliefs about bodies. In her work on embodiment and gender, Bordo argues that women’s bodies function rhetorically prior to their speech. Importantly, she reminds us that while no one moment is specifically responsible, a pervasive ideology that defines women and women’s bodies in a particular way has affected the cultural place (and therefore power) of women for generations, and, according to Bordo, has been reinforced by the images of women that circulate in that culture. This is, after all, how ideology functions, by repetition. Images of women in the nineteenth century in the United States, for instance, grew from this ideological perception of the “natural” belief that women belonged in the private sphere and therefore tended to locate women firmly and narrowly in domestic spaces, as mothers, caretakers, or workers in the domestic arenas of cooking, sewing, or socializing.

The Western gender divide which identifies logic as male and emotion as female has repercussions for considering who can be seen as rhetors, specifically with respect to the canon of delivery. Beginning with classical rhetoric and continuing for centuries, the canon of delivery was narrowly understood. Given Aristotle’s focus on the strength of the logic and the facts, his treatment of delivery in Book III of *Rhetoric* is somewhat limited. In considering the role of delivery in oration, he says that it is "of the greatest importance," but offers little detail beyond this pronouncement. He does say that "there are three qualities that are considered,--volume, harmony, rhythm," but he continues, "no treatise has yet been composed on delivery, since the matter of style itself only lately came into notice." Cicero, on the other hand, offers slightly more consideration in discussing the canon of delivery in *De Oratore*. While he suggests that special training is not necessary, Cicero argues that the effective orator will demonstrate "the subtlety of the logician, the thoughts of the philosopher, a diction almost poetic, a lawyer's bearing, a tragedian's voice, and the bearing almost of the consummate actor." These qualities, of course, are gendered from the start, specifically reflecting the limitations on public participation by women in the classical world. Since men have been associated with the mind, logic, and reasoning and women have been traditionally associated with the body, including the instinctual, irrational, threatening, submissive nature of the body, women were largely absent from most consideration in classical rhetoric, simply invisible. The presumption was that the public arena was the domain of men, so women were largely consigned to private spaces, left to manage the home and the family. Though individual women from the classical world, through centuries, challenged these constructions and became influential rhetors in their own rights, those gendered limitations persisted, so that public life continued to be dominated by men and women continued to be confined to the domestic sphere.

First-Wave Feminism and Visible Bodies

Because longstanding beliefs about the proper place and role for women created narrow constraints within which women's activism grew in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, their work to gain access to public participation required subverting this persistent ideology that rendered them largely invisible in matters of public import. Suffrage activists, then, needed to find ways to directly challenge the expectation of domesticity and invisibility while maintaining a sense of morality and respect in the communities in which they lived. Working to maintain a sense of respectability inside a system that has defined and confined one's life created challenges both for individuals and for the movements, as they grapple with navigating these public spaces as what Roxanne Mountford calls "rhetorical spaces" (42). How could these women simultaneously embody and resist the contexts in which they were living?

In her consideration of women, space, and comportment, Iris Marion Young reminds us that female bodies and the actions of those bodies often reflect the cultural expectations and limitations in which they function. Young's argument that the positionality and activity of women is often related to the "basic fact of the woman's social existence as the object of the gaze of another, which is a major source of her bodily self-reference" (148). Young argues that women are seen as objects and ultimately come to see themselves as objects. In being seen and experiencing themselves as mere bodies, women tend to alter their movements to reflect this notion of object. From classical texts to the ongoing development of national identities, the dominant and pervasive ideology of Western culture is a gendered one, limiting the engagement of women, the visibility of women, and consequently, the voices of women. In this context, women who want to become visible and heard must recognize and engage this dominant discourse about them in order to counter it and become visible as rhetors.

This aim for visibility is not unique to the suffrage movement, of course, given the ways that marginalized people always have to work to achieve the visibility of the center.[6] Any cursory study of social movements will include one of the most expected elements of active protest movements of marginalized peoples in the contemporary United States—bodies: bodies marching, sitting, singing, chanting. The actions of those bodies may change, but the bodies themselves serve to help an issue become visible, as public opinion and media coverage often centers narrowly on the numbers of people who show up. Social movement scholars have often focused on the protest activities that activists employ as tactics to achieve political aims. For example, Aldon D. Morris and Doug McAdam, among many others, have written about the tactics used by protestors during the Civil Rights Movement in the U. S. in the mid-twentieth century, considering the actions of boycotts, sit-ins, and other mass actions, specifically those associated with Freedom Summer. Other scholars, including Kerran L. Sanger and Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, have focused on cultural acts like creating music, considering how both

[6] Visibility, invisibility, and hypervisibility are central concerns for scholarship in various disciplines. Particularly, scholars studying marginalized and minority groups and rights movements often consider the challenges of in/visibility. In addition to the relationship of visibility to political agency, a number of education, rhetoric, and disabilities scholars have written about the challenges of invisible disabilities in the classroom and the workplace. Additionally, in considering the invisibility of whiteness and heterosexuality, Maureen Reddy looks at the question of visibility and hypervisibility as they intersect race and identity. The question of the role of visibility in the lives of marginalized groups is well-studied and establishes both the significance of and threats related to being seen. For women in the Suffrage Movement, visibility was specifically related to public visibility as civic participants.

the lyrics of activist songs and the act of singing itself worked to support movement goals. My work seeks to intersect with these scholars by specifically considering the roles of bodies acting in concert along with material ephemera to achieve particular rhetorical goals.

Though not the most obvious element of social movements, the material ephemera often carried on those bodies has also long been associated with rights movements in the United States. While we are accustomed to seeing masses of people wearing the same color, or donning various shirts or ribbons today, the study of an historic case of these rhetorical acts provides a stark example of how the act of wearing can be a rhetorical move aimed at achieving visibility and voice. As such, I want to consider this political ephemera as a kind of dress, which even when combined with otherwise conservative clothing choices resists the constraints of gendered ideology pervasive in this historical context. Like Carol Mattingly, I aim to "understand how bodies and dress helped to define the struggle for representation and power that is rhetoric" (4).

While certainly not the first example of women working to gain visibility and voice, women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries offer a valuable case to study. First-wave feminists made a number of important rhetorical moves over several decades, both as individuals and as groups, in their work toward creating political and social change in the US. Of course, numerous feminist scholars have written about the importance and effects of a variety of feminist rhetoric from suffragists, perhaps most notably, Karyn Kohrs Campbell's *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, as she offers critical analysis of the rhetorical importance of a variety of speeches and other texts. Other scholars consider visual rhetoric, including Michele Ramsay's argument focused on suffrage rhetoric responding to World War I, where she suggests that "[p]erhaps little rhetorical scholarship focused on women from 1900-1920 because the firsts decade of the 1900s was a substantial part of what many suffrage historians call the 'doldrums' period of the movement" (Ramsey 114). She goes on to suggest that while little scholarship on that period exists, lots of activity occurred in the movement in that period, particularly "strategies and ideas that the movement had about…womanhood in general" (114). Focusing on analysis of visual rhetoric offered in political cartoons, Ramsey argues that these creative images functioned to reinforce a particularly important identity for women in the movement—that of the woman citizen.

My work aims to extend the important work done by other scholars to include a critical look at the ways bodies and ephemera can enact rhetorical aims, particularly considering how the rhetorical act of wearing ribbons and sashes provided an embodied visual opportunity to reinforce public identification of woman with agentic citizenship. While less widely studied than the discursive rhetoric of oratory and signage, wearing ribbons and sashes, both homemade and mass produced, allowed these women to become visible and heard, amplifying the discursive rhetoric in ways that had not been possible before. I argue that these acts of wearing (particularly while gathering in meetings or marching), provided a way for these women to challenge the dominant discourse about women's participation in public life, ultimately reinforcing the public identity of the political agentic woman, the "woman citizen" that Ramsey describes. Indeed, the act of wearing here, like the contemporary moments of wearable technology, offers a moment of rhetorical collaboration, in which bodies acting in concert and collaborating with material items attached to their bodies achieve a kind of visibility that aims to resist their marginalization. In considering the means by which first-wave feminists in the U.S. enacted embodied and material protest rhetoric in service to the cause of attaining suffrage for women, I argue that the study of social movements and protest rhetoric can glean lessons from this moment on two distinct fronts. First, following the lead of new materialist scholars, I argue that the wearable objects of this movement allowed both the objects themselves and the bodies on which they were worn to work in concert, amplifying the political voice of the group by providing visibility and an emergent agency that would not have been possible for either the objects or the bodies independently. Secondly, I consider how these wearable objects provided much-needed durability to the ephemeral acts with which they were initially associated by challenging the gendered expectations of delivery in public spaces, as these women began to be seen by men as more than mere annoyance, but instead as an army with a political goal in mind. Accordingly, women wearing ribbons and sashes increased the ways women could see themselves as an agentic collective, increased the possibility of the broader public, including the then male-dominated media, seeing them and their activities as part of persuasive force.

Women living in the nineteenth century had long understood the limits of their political agency, and while the women in the movement may have found agreement in the desire to gain the vote, plenty of disagreement about the roles of women in society and politics remained, even among women, as Kraditor reminds us. Women who were anti-suffrage saw the suffragist movement as “a conscious assault on the ideas and institutions long accepted by most middle-class Americans” (Kraditor 14). So, while some women in this context aimed to gain the vote and challenge this system, others embraced the institutional divides, finding a level of comfort, perhaps, in the clarity of expectations. Regardless of their position on suffrage, though, nineteenth century women living in this context were fully aware of what their culture largely expected of them and their bodies: Silent, private, domesticated. Certainly, a study of women in the nineteenth century offers plenty of examples of women working to speak into public life. Many of those women, like Maria Stewart, Sojourner Truth, and the Grimke sisters, have found their way into many rhetorical and historical studies in a way that highlights the fact that the more well-known figures of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton had compatriots in living rooms and meeting halls across the country, all working to gain rights for women. Of course, those women were not alone. In *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell reminds us that many unnamed and unknown women were working in domestic spaces to influence public policy in the way they could: by convincing their agentic husbands to adopt and vote for particular positions. While these women and their rhetorical activity within their marriages created effects worth noting, I am particularly interested in a different group of unknown women, those who gathered in public spaces to march and their contributions to a movement that was decidedly collective, even as our cultural memory chooses to highlight and name only a few leaders.

Embodying Different Tactics: Tie a Yellow Ribbon

Over the course of the late nineteenth century, the women's suffrage movement shifted, with gains and losses, as well as organizational challenges.[7] During this time, the reputations of a number of important women activists grew and the development of significant organizations and events continued, including yearly events following the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention. Kohrs Campbell reports that national conventions related to the movement, beginning with Seneca Falls and including yearly national events, offered "forums for the debate of movement ideas" (50). These conventions provide a means by which movement ideology can be not only crafted, but dispersed. On the local front, sociologist Holly McCammon considers the tactical shifts that occurred on the state level. McCammon reports that "[f]or most of the nineteenth century, the primary activities of the state suffragists were twofold: They held gatherings primarily among women sympathetic to the cause to increase membership in their suffrage organizations and they discretely lobbied state legislators" (790). The tactics of the movement, like many similar social movements, were shifting with time, leadership, and social contexts.

Recognizing the established doxa constraining women, the leaders of the movement offered alternative ideologies in these gatherings to encourage other women to

[7] The tensions between leaders in the Women's Suffrage Movement in the nineteenth century are well known. Numerous scholars have written about the Suffrage Movement, including the creation of the National American Woman Suffrage Association late in the century to merge the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association. Aileen Kraditor offers an important look at the development of the movement. More recently, Historian Lisa Tetrault offers a critical look at the development and leadership of organizations in her 2014 book *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement*, 1848-1898. Given the limitations of this chapter, rather than trace the development and challenges of leadership and organizational structure during this time, I aim to consider the unifying force of the ribbon and the color yellow as a symbol of the movement.

join the cause of their own freedom. However, given the relative isolation accompanying the separate sphere ideology, the communication was largely within the movement and confined to activist events where "women attempted to persuade other women to violate the norms of true womanhood and to become activists for women's rights" (Kohrs Campbell 50). When these women, ostensibly living private lives, gathered together in public spaces, the possibility for joining the movement increased, and the movement from private to public was underway. Then, once women were persuaded and decided to participate actively in the movement, tactics would need to involve and even leverage the collectivity being built. The speeches and resolutions would continue to have a critical place in the movement, of course, but we also begin to see how the everyday woman in regions across the country may begin to use her abilities to contribute to the movement. While McCammon focuses her analysis on parades as "collective protest in the streets" that were seen as "strikingly bold" (790), I want to focus on how those bodies showed up on the streets collectively. Carol Mattingly argues that "Cultural conventions collaborated in perpetuating the myth of women as private and chaste in spite of the fact that they were so often on display" (137). As women joined the movement and took to public events and gatherings as part of their activism, they sought new ways to resist those cultural conventions. While many suffrage activists of the time did not abandon the traditionally feminine dress expected of them, they found other ways to adorn their bodies, bodies that were central to the cultural constraints they experienced. Specifically, I turn to consider how material culture and the popularity of sewing circles offered a ready opportunity for fashioning a new tactic for a movement continuing to grapple with the cultural constraints of a tightly gendered society.

As central to separate sphere ideology, the figure of the sewing woman is perhaps one of the most common images associated with the domestic sphere of the nineteenth century. In the realm of sewing, needlework and embroidery were central, demonstrating skill both in crafting fashionable clothing and also in the decorative areas of sampler stitching and tapestries. While we may look back at the products of this work as art, British scholar Rozsika Parker argues in *The Subversive Stitch* that the skill of embroidery in the nineteenth century was an "expression of femininity" and part of the patriarchal division between craft and art, with women and craft being relegated to a lesser position (5). A woman who could sew and adorn her home and her family with well-wrought items warranted the respect owed to a proper "angel of the house."

Using these domestic skills had previously offered women a subversive political opportunity. In 1847, a brief mention in *The Liberator* suggested that:

> Sewing circles are among the best means for agitating and keeping alive the question of anti-slavery. Not only do they continually fan the interest of those who personally engage in them, but their frequent meetings, their labor, and the products of their industry all exert an excellent influence in keeping the wrongs and the sufferings of the slave before the people. ("Anti-Slavery Sewing Circles")

Recognizing the considerable influence that existed in established gatherings of women suggests that the abolition movement used these sewing circles in much the same ways as the National Conventions and other gatherings of the women's suffrage movement. Given that the predominate ideology limited the kinds of gatherings women might enjoy, including limiting the public access that men benefitted from, using these gendered get-togethers as a means for fomenting support for the movement was a savvy tactic.

The popular acceptance of sewing and craft as part of domestic femininity finds a productive partnership in the longstanding popularity of campaign wearables. Political memorabilia in the form of ribbons, buttons, and other ephemera have been a part of the political landscape in the United States for generations, certainly predating the well-known organized push toward suffrage for women in the mid-nineteenth century. Kenneth Florey's *Women's Suffrage Memorabilia: An Illustrated Historical Study* suggests that wearable ribbons were identifiable parts of the political process in the United States as far back as "the first quarter of the nineteenth century" (154).[8] In addition to the political use of such ribbons and badges, these ephemera have a similarly long history within various organizations, from trade union to fraternal and religious organizations.[9]

A particular focus on political objects, though, demonstrates that these ribbons, made most frequently of silk or cotton, served numerous functions, including serving as

[8] Political ephemera is an area of significant study outside of rhetorical scholarship. In addition to Florey's work on memorabilia of the Women's Suffrage Movement, other scholars in history, design, sociology, and art history have written about the use and history of political ephemera. Lotte Larsen (1994) writes about the yellow ribbon in the Gulf War context. Historian Michael Allen (2007) looks specifically at political buttons used in the U.S. from 1828-1976. Additionally, significant collections of political ephemera, both related to suffrage and not, can be found at the National Museum of American History in Washington D.C. and in various archives, including the Library of Congress and National Archives, as well as many academic libraries.

[9] Numerous local libraries and archives hold examples of fraternal and labor organizations ephemera, including membership ribbons. Local historical societies have also published small books on individual organizations or local ribbon usage. Additionally, historians have considered ribbons as part of larger movements, including Kyle Hughes' and Donald MacRaild's recent book about Irish Ribbonism, a nineteenth century movement in support of rights for poor Irish Catholics.

bookmarks, commemorating events, or memorializing specific events or individuals, often for movements but occasionally as representing specific candidates. On this front, Florey reports that "pinholes in some surviving examples indicate that they were also worn, probably to marches and rallies. Following the various Lincoln campaigns, however, ribbons moved from the book to the lapel. Once there, they became the campaign item of choice until the end of the century when celluloid buttons began to replace them" (154). What we see here is a shift from memorabilia to wearable status of ribbons. While women were still wearing conventionally feminine, generally conservative dress in public, they sought ways to align themselves with the movement to break those conventions. The confluence of the popularity of these political wearable objects as part of the political rhetorical spectrum and the continued focus on the domestic art of sewing and fabric craft offers women a material means of creating visibility, and perhaps political voice.

While political ribbons had been associated with campaigns for decades, the initial use of the yellow ribbon as a symbol for the Women's Suffrage Movement seems most clearly connected to a failed action for women's voting rights. In the second half of the nineteenth century, state suffrage groups worked to win the vote for women in a sort of piecemeal approach, seeking voting rights at the state level, having found little success on the national front. In 1867, during a statewide campaign to enfranchise women, a group of Kansas activists created yellow ribbons for their movement. The Kansas campaign, though failing to achieve suffrage either for women or for black people, engaged the attention of movement leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone. The vote did not achieve its ends, but the yellow sunflower found its place in a larger, national campaign for women's rights.

While the origins of the sunflower appear connected to the 1867 campaign, the yellow ribbon as the chosen badge for the suffrage movement dates to the 1887 Kansas campaign and continued during other campaigns (see figure 1). The yellow ribbon was used in second and third campaigns to achieve suffrage in Kansas, becoming, as the "pro- suffrage journal *Justicia*" reported, "'adopted as the distinguishing badge of the woman suffrage army'" (qtd. in Florey 154). Specifically, Florey credits Kansas activist Laura Johns with the creation of the ribbon (154). Indeed, John's participation in the Suffrage Movement is well established. The Kansas Historical Society notes that she worked on numerous suffrage campaigns in Kansas and was elected to serve as the President of the Kansas State Suffrage Association six times.

Figure 1. Kansas Amendment Ribbon, 1894. Image from Collection of Kenneth Florey.

Writing in *Woman's Standard* in 1896 about the origins of the "suffrage badge," Johns aims to clarify what she indicates is a mistaken belief that the "suffrage badge as adopted in Kansas was originally the sunflower." Johns asserts that "the suffrage badge in Kansas was never anything but the 'ribbon of sunflower hue' ("The Origin of Our Badge"). In that article, Johns claims credit for the origination of the yellow ribbon as the suffrage badge. She reports, "I went to the Kansas Equal Suffrage association in October of 1887 fully determined to propose the thing I had had in mind for three years, viz, a suffrage badge….the yellow ribbon was adopted as the Kansas suffrage badge, and very soon came into national use" (Johns, "The Origin of Our Badge"). Though the movement at this point included many separately-functioning state campaigns, that the symbol became used nationwide indicates the awareness that these women had of the power of a visual symbol.[10]

These yellow ribbons, reflecting the color of the sunflower, the Kansas state flower, served as identifying visual rhetoric, allowing both the women and others in the vicinity recognize the women who were fighting for suffrage. The importance of the color is discussed in a number of public writings of suffragists of the time. An 1890 article in the *Women's Suffrage Journal* reports that the "'yellow sunflower ribbon'

[10] Prior to the 1889 article, some sources appear to have challenged the Kansas origins of the badge, leading Johns to publish an article in the *Woman's Tribune* in 1888 to clarify. There, Johns acknowledges other reports, stating that "*Justitia* says 'the yellow ribbon was first adopted by the American Suffrage Convention in Philadelphia.'" She goes on to assert, "This is a mistake. The sunflower-yellow ribbon was first adopted by the K.E.S.A. at the annual meeting in Newton, October last." She then works to justify her assertion by naming women who wore it home that evening and a fashionable young woman who took it from there to Boston. Johns acknowledges that "the idea probably had conception in other parts of the Union, but it came to it birth first in Kansas by reason of the progressive make-up of Kansas women."

seems rapidly becoming as marked an emblem of a supporter of women's suffrage as the blue ribbon is of a temperance advocate" (H.B.). Another writer asserts that yellow "may well stand for the golden dawn of equal suffrage that is now breaking all over the world" (A. S. B.). Additionally, a correspondent in Kansas mused that " '…the sunflower is peculiarly appropriate for suffragists, since this flower follows civilisation, always looks toward the light, is trampled on but not killed, and comes up anew every year in spite of discouraging frosts. The color is also appropriate in itself, being one of the primal tints, 'born of purity and light,'…" (H. B.) These nineteenth-century activists were keenly aware of the symbolic messages communicated by attaching a colorful ribbon badge to their clothes when they appeared in public. Seeking to associate their cause with the bright light of dawn, campaigners aimed to create ribbons that ultimately took a variety of shapes and designs. The meaning, of course, was not lost, even if the form of the ribbon was simple and appeared to hearken to their domestic roles with its initial homemade nature.

Certainly, the original form of the yellow ribbon was a simple, hand-produced item, with little in the way of the commercial ribbons that come to be popularized in later decades. This description squares with the statements of Susan B. Anthony, writing in the *Women's Tribune* 1889, when she writes that as part of the campaign in South Dakota, she "cut and tied a whole bolt of yellow ribbon and every woman went out of the court house with a little sunflower-colored knot pinned to her coat or shawl." Clearly, the DIY nature of the ribbon extended from the now anonymous women working in groups to gain the vote to the well-known leaders of the national movement. The homespun nature of these ribbons serves as an ironic upsetting of the domesticated sphere in which these women existed, in the choice to use their sewing skills, acts firmly located in homes and private spaces, as support for public political action. Though fashion as political rhetoric often creates class cache around particular items, the homemade nature of these ribbons and the use of the sunflower yellow, reflecting a heartland, land-based ethic, can be read as an emergent political agency. Of course, while not using embroidery as such, the use of a traditionally feminine art, craft and needlepoint, to create a political item aiming at resistance is certainly of note as well. Unfortunately, because of the handmade nature of these early ephemera, few examples remain in archives, while many of the premade ribbons are collected across the country.

While these women were not previously afforded access to the political process, the use of these objects as a means to enact political performance reflects Marilyn Cooper's emergent agency. In her explanation of the complexity of the development of agency, Cooper argues that change occurs not as the result of some "conscious intention nor free will," but rather as the dynamic interplay of circumstances in which "agency is an emergent property of embodied individuals" (421). The use of ribbons to designate convention attendees or supporters of the Kansas movement made the women (and their labor, in the form of the ribbons) visible on the streets. The act of wearing the ribbon, then, functioned to make visible the women who had not yet been successful in their attempts to speak in the political arena. When linguistic moves like the Petition for Universal Suffrage failed, women turned to the rhetorical acts, sewing and wearing, that were an accepted part of the culture's expectations for them. In doing so, I argue that an emergent agency was produced, one that ultimately moved from the Kansas movement to the broader national movement.

The ribbon, then, acted as a signal to the public, one that indicated the participation of a woman in the suffrage movement. While posters and announcements might offer the names of speakers and other leaders of the movement, the ribbon was a democratizing symbol, one that allowed every woman participant and supporter to publicly declare her message about suffrage, offering a new means of delivering rhetorical support for the movement. The ribbon also offered the possibility of collective association, letting the suffragist "speak" her allegiance to the group and its work with her body. Mary Livermore, writing in *The Women's Journal* in 1894, reminds supporters that many groups and organizations "display their colors when they meet in convention or for festal occasions," and calls on Suffragists to embody their cause at the Spring Festival: "Let every matron wear a knot of yellow ribbon on the left breast; every girl a bow of yellow ribbon, with long ends, on the left shoulder, and let every may who is of us, and with us, wear a yellow ribbon in the button hole, or on the lapel of his coat" (Livermore). While recognizing the expectations of comportment and dress in public activities, Livermore and other activists recognized the rhetorical power of wearing a color in mass, in public.

The strength of this symbol was increased by a move to offer access to these ribbons (and other ephemera) to women without the labor required to produce them. By the time the yellow ribbon was adopted by other state movements, the ribbons were often no longer handmade, but were printed and offered for purchase at events. By 1894, during Kansas' continued fight, ribbons were not only seen but sold, allowing greater numbers of suffragists to enact their political agency on their bodies. An announcement posted in *Woman's Journal* prior to a festival in 1894 reported that "[k]nots of yellow ribbon, price ten cents, with pin attached, are for sale…." (C. W.) These ribbons, while offering variety in terms of attachment mechanism, shape and language, can be seen as circulating a growing symbol of the movement—a yellow ribbon (see figure 2). Here we see the enactment of circulation of rhetoric, whereby women in various places and associated with various conventions acted rhetorically by wearing similar ribbon. Beyond Kansas, various statewide campaigns used ribbons as part of their movements, examples of which can be found in numerous collections and archives of suffrage memorabilia.

Figure 2. Woman Suffrage Ribbons from Various State Conventions and Organizations. Image from collection of Kenneth Florey.

In figure 2, we see a number of examples of "delegate" ribbons, along with others designating other roles in those gatherings (like "usher"), designed to identify participants in one of the many women's conferences and conventions that took place over the decades between the Kansas campaign and the 1913 March.

Sashes

While the suffrage ribbon served a very specific function to connect women's bodies with the public performance of the political rights of citizens, other objects offered similar rhetorical effects. Another embodied material item also came to prominence as larger gatherings occurred, particularly the parades and marches that became more popular after the turn of the twentieth century. For many, the now well-known Suffragist's Sash is a more recognizable wearable object to be associated with the movement. It can be seen clearly in many archival photographs of these events, perhaps because sashes are, obviously, much larger than ribbons. In addition to the visibility of a sash, as the commercialization of these suffrage objects became more common, sashes became an easy way to create organizational association. While they functioned similarly to the ribbons, offering a visual message of support for the movement that functioned as a means of Burkean identification in large gatherings of women. Indeed, the aesthetics of the sashes often echoed the ribbons, combining the yellow (for association with NAWSA) and a similar typography to identify women working to on behalf of their own suffrage. These sashes became deeply associated with the movement, and though they functioned to identify members of the movement in parades and marches, their rhetorical functioning is somewhat different from the ribbons, by virtue of the limits of the messages found on many surviving examples of sashes. Whereas ribbons could indicate the occurrence of a particular campaign or the words from a speech, sashes generally carried a simple "votes for women" message, as in the example in figure 3 shows.

Figure 3. Votes for Women Sash, ca 1910. National Museum of American History.

Therefore, these sashes could certainly be seen as functioning rhetorically to identify and create consubstantiality. Additionally, they offer a sense of delivery as being associated with women's bodies; however, given that the sash was often worn by speakers at large gatherings, the challenge to the notion of rhetorical delivery being associated with the singular body speaking on a stage is less striking. Additionally, the notion of circulation offered by ribbons adorned with slogans and dates is limited on sashes by the more narrow choice of text.

Rhetorical Implications of Wearing

Clearly, the Suffrage Movement cannot be seen as a singular movement or one that focused on singular practices or strategies, as any rights movement that spans decades and enlists such a variety of bodies to act will resist any attempts to simplify its story to a singular narrative. Considering the creation and wearing of protest ephemera like ribbons and sashes, several distinct rhetorical effects were created. I will discuss each of these in turn, beginning with the possibilities for achieving identification and thus creating a collectivity.

In the context of a decades-long movement with a number of internal conflicts among various groups, a means of creating some sense of unity, particularly to be performed in the public, would help establish greater cohesion and perhaps help heal rifts. The wearing of ribbons and sashes offered a visual means of establishing coalition. Certainly, this use of ribbons reflects Burke's notion of identification, as ribbon-wearers certainly acknowledged a kind of consubstantiality with one another as supporters of a cause. The period between 1869 and 1916 had been active years for the Women's Suffrage movement. Eileen Kraditor reports that during this period, "there were 41 state amendment campaigns, including 9 successes and 32 failures" (5). Given the challenged nature of the women's movement at the end of the nineteenth century, with multiple actions happening by multiple groups in multiple states, what Kraditor calls a "period of doldrums" in the movement (6), unification was needed. Just as the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) was coming into being to bridge the gap between the American Women's Suffrage Association and the National Women's Suffrage Association, women donned yellow ribbons and "Votes for Women" sashes, offered a clear means of identification, creating a collectivity in the process. In this way, these ribbons demonstrate what Gries (2016) calls a "rhetorical becoming," gaining a kind of rhetoricity not previously in place. While ribbons had been used for political campaigns much earlier than the suffrage movement, the ways in which this assemblage of ribbons came to function for a wide-ranging movement like suffrage demonstrates the rhetorical power of this thing—establishing a collectivity that amplifies and provides significant circulatory opportunity for a wide-ranging movement. That collectivity provides both a sense of togetherness within the community and a greater likelihood of been seen and heard by the dominant political forces (men) in the country. No longer could individual women be written off in public spaces, if they were accompanied by a collective-building object designed to connect them to a larger, more agentic cause.

Indeed, the act of ribbon-wearing itself became a sort of rhetorical delivery, connecting the visual rhetoric of the ribbon with the embodied rhetoric of women's bodies on the street, particularly when participating in parades or other public gatherings. While affixing an object to one's body as a woman may have previously been seen as an act of adornment, largely for the pleasure of the male gaze, ribbon-wearing in this moment becomes a different rhetorical act.

As a movement largely defined by the voices of particular individual leaders, the Suffrage Movement, like many other social movement of the past and present, relied heavily on the size of the movement for a public visibility and amplification of concerns, as a means of achieving agency in the public arena. If Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, or Alice Paul were to appear at an event, public attention would be drawn, simply by virtue of the notoriety that came to be associated with these leaders. However, in the public imaginary, this individual notoriety had a limit that the masses of women who became active in the movement helped to surpass. As women donned ribbons to attend conferences and conventions, they circulated the message. Additionally, when women wore ribbons and sashes and took to the streets *en masse*, as in the 1913 March on Washington, their very presence and their association suggested by the wearable adornments, functioned as a sort of amplification whereby the message of leaders like Cady Stanton, Anthony, and Paul became magnified and the collective voice could speak louder. The choice to use their bodies in this way, bodies once expected to exist only in private individual spaces, enacted the most fundamental of feminist principle—collaboration and collective action.

Late in the nineteenth century, these golden ribbons served at least two distinct rhetorical purposes: not only was the ribbon adopted as a badge of the convention delegates, but it also became ubiquitous as a means of circulation for Suffrage Movement rhetoric at various marches and gatherings over the course of the next several decades. Serving as both a means to identify participants or delegates and as a kind of souvenir, these ribbons enacted powerful rhetorical practices on their own. As one example of how ribbons could serve as an additional means of communicating discursive message, one ribbon carried the assertion "failure is impossible," from a speech by Susan B. Anthony.

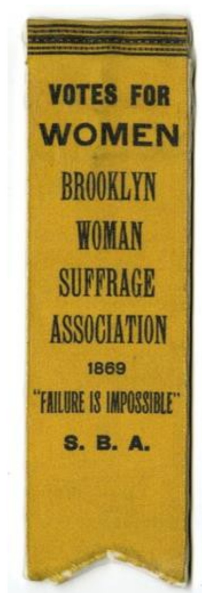

Figure 4. 1869 Brooklyn Woman Suffrage Association Ribbon.

This ribbon (see figure 4), dated 1869 to indicate the founding of the Brooklyn Woman Suffrage Association, suggests a means of circulating important ideas from movement leaders. Given the constraints that existed for women to circulate ideas, as groups of women began donning these ribbons in public spaces and in groups, the visibility and rhetorical messages of the movement became amplified. No longer would women have to be present to hear the words of movement leaders like Anthony, and no longer would those words be associated only with her. Instead, the objects these women wore in public offered visibility and unmistakable affiliation with the suffrage movement while amplifying and circulating the rhetoric of its leaders in an act of commemoration along with a kind of speech.

While those Kansas seamstresses may not have recognized the shift that was coming, the rhetorical power of wearing these objects in particular public moments was not lost, of course, on other groups of women gathering in various meetings in the burgeoning women's movement or in the larger culture. Given the shift in the movement on what Mattingly calls a "focus toward attaining positive press and constructing a favorable image of the public woman" (109), that small act might open space for a radical re-visioning of the female body in political, public spaces. While the women engaged in some of these conferences and other gatherings wore clothes that were relatively conservative, maintaining their ethos in a public space that was not expecting feminine presence, perhaps in an effort to keep attention on their message and not on their bodies, the ribbons functioned to separate them from women who may have been traveling the streets in activity not associated with women's rights. In an act of identification, the ribbon allowed these women to recognize one another at a glance, while also offering a unifying sense of their group to onlookers.

Of course, one can argue that gatherings of women adorned both with ribbons and sashes could produce more powerful rhetorical effects. Indeed, perhaps the most significant moment of collective wearing came in March of 1913 when the large group of suffragists took to the streets of Washington, D.C., to march in support of voting rights for women. As figure 5 shows, many of these women arrived in D.C. adorned with ribbons that identified them as members of the movement, providing a means to perform rhetorical delivery in a powerful way, even when they were not speaking.

Figure 5. Marchers at the 1913 Suffrage Parade. Bain News Service.

Lindal Buchanan, in her *Regendering Delivery*, notes that women in the nineteenth century are largely “prohibited from standing and speaking in public, their voices and forms acceptable only in the spectator role” (2). While seemingly adhering to this imposed public silence, these women, gathering together and wearing rather conservative attire and formal hats, perform a kind of rhetorical delivery simply by wearing the ribbons that separate them from other women on the streets of D.C. that day. While their dress largely resembled the everyday attire of women, the addition of a golden ribbon indicated clearly and immediately that they were associated with the Suffrage Movement. Other photography from the day shows more of the reported 5000 marchers, all of whom are identified by either a ribbon or sash or, in some cases, both. These wearable items offer women a means of rhetorical delivery prior to speech. In this way, we see these women taking advantage of the dominant discourse that Bordo speaks to, of women's bodies speaking first. Similarly, Mattingly argues that dress "provided an effective means of resistance….In their efforts to project a positive ethos, women made dress speak for them" (7). Adorning those bodies with ribbons and sashes delivered a rhetorical message to any present to witness, moving these women from the role of spectator and into the role of public rhetor.

In this circumstance, not only were these women being seen as individuals rhetorically engaging in the political discourse around suffrage, but also their bodies began to be seen not only as a gathering of individuals, but as a collective. In this way, the wearing of ribbons and sashes accomplished not only a sense of political voice, but also a means to enact the collective power of women that underpins feminist theory today. Indeed, others took note. In a May 1913 overview of the cause of Women's Suffrage in the *New York Times*, just two months after March on Washington, the reporter noted a shift, as women had regularly shown up as a collective. The writer notes that "most people didn't know the fight [for a federal Amendment to the Constitution] had ever been made before, while everybody knows it is being made this year" ("Great Advance of Suffrage" SM3). Presumably, the amplification of the action was tied to the recent march. The reporter goes on to say:

> With the wives and daughters of prominent Senators and Representatives marching in the great parade in Washington on March 3 an object lesson was given of the headway the movement had made in Congress, the place where for so many years it was treated as a joke….The Washington parade was for the purpose of impressing the incoming Administration and the incoming Congress with the fact that woman suffrage had numerical strength and strong support ("Great Advance of Suffrage" SM3).

The bodies in the street, it appears, mattered. Their number and the ease with which observers could identify them as suffrage activists offered a strong, collective message.

Around this same time, the media, primarily in the form of newspapers, recognized the wearing and called attention to the groups in a new way. Indicating the rhetorical power of wearing these ribbons as groups, writers began referring to the women at these gatherings not simply as women or supporters, but as a "women's army." As early as 1908, newspapers stories reporting suffrage activism in Britain and the U.S. identified the collective of women in this way. For instance, a June 1908 edition of the *San Francisco Call* identified the group of London activists as an "Army of Women" in a headline for a story reporting a march. That story, in addition to having a collective title of "army" in the headline, recognize the collectivity of the group walking behind identifying banners, reporting that "all sorts of women whose conditions in life are as wide asunder as the poles took part in the march and united in the common cause of women suffrage" ("Army of Women"). Similarly in the U.S., in a May 1913 *New York*

Times article, the heading "An Army of Voters" was used to introduce the fact that "[t]wo million women now vote in the United States on the same terms with men" ("Great Advance of Suffrage" SM3). Beyond the label of "army" in reportage of the time, visual representations of the Suffrage movement began to indicate the construction of Suffragists as a group, an army of sorts.

One significant example of this visual acknowledgment of collectivity can be found in a set of political cartoons published in various newspapers following the 1913 March.[11] Given the historic role of political cartoons in public discourse in the United States, that the Suffragists regularly appeared in political cartoons comes as no surprise. While many cartoonists criticized women activists in harsh and pointed ways, this collection following the 1913 March suggests that these women were achieving a sort of legitimacy. These cartoons, provided in figure 6, offer parodies of historic images, with women suffragists in place of men in celebrated settings from significant historical moments and well-known images. For instance, one cartoon, titled "The Spirit of '13" showed women marching in line, echoing the image of a military band from "Spirit of '76," carrying a "Votes for Women" flag. Another cartoon, also titled "The Spirit of '13" shows women trudging through snow while envisioning themselves voting. The third, titled "Gen Jones Crossing the Delaware" showed Rosalie Jones, a leader of the activists from New York, standing in a boat, mimicking the famous image of George Washington.

[11] According to the Library of Congress, these cartoons were drawn by three well-known artists of the time, Clifford Berryman, Robert W. Satterfield, and J.H. Donahey, The cartoons were published in the *Washington Star*, *Central Press Association*, and *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

Figure 6. Collection of Political Cartoons about the 1913 March to Washington.

Jones was referred to as "General Jones" (Taylor, "The 1913 Women's Suffrage Parade"), so placing her in the position of General Washington reinforces the idea that the suffragists were seen as an 'army' of sorts. These cartoons provide some evidence for the effect that collective wearing and marching was having on a broader audience. The well-known male cartoonists, working for mainstream publications, depicted women in roles previously, and famously, filled by men. As part of the public response to the March on Washington, these cartoons further demonstrate the extent to which the collective of women wearing sashes and ribbons, carrying banners, and marching in public sent a rhetorical message.

These ephemeral objects of sashes and ribbons clearly have an old protest history that demonstrates the power of a marginalized group using materials and skills available to them to craft a moveable and wearable rhetorical assemblage that would speak on their bodies, even when their voices were muted. The ribbons and sashes both enabled an emergent rhetorical agency for the women who wore them and also enacted rhetorical agency of their own, crafting a notion of public delivery that served to challenge the political barriers they were determined to break.

The women marching on Washington in 1913 clearly understood this history of wearing objects and the importance of the collectivity of marchers, so they did not show up there unaware. The planning and publication that accompanied the march demonstrated their intent to act collectively, with their bodies, to engage in public discourse in the way that they could. While the archival photography of the day offers any examples of women at the March wearing these items, the official materials produced for the event also demonstrate the rhetorical awareness of these activists. Specifically, the cover for the program (see figure 7) brings to bear the lens through which these women saw themselves and their event. The familiar image of the capitol rises in the background, reminding the viewer of their goal to win the right to vote. The style of the image blends the impressionistic style that was popular at the time with an almost regal image of the women. Importantly, the woman in the center of the image, riding on a horse and blowing a horn, apparently calling women to the procession, offers a remarkable image of a woman both adorned and in charge. The swirling fabric, gold and purple and white, branded the event as part of the national suffrage movement, highlighting the collectivity.

Figure 7. Benjamin Dale Photo of the Official Program for the 1913 D.C. March.

Her short hair and proud stature remind viewers that the women marching in Washington that day were clear-headed, confident, and ready to move their actions to the public space of the capitol.

While those women may have enacted a powerful form of agency in their domestic spaces, speaking to husbands and friends about their political concerns prior to that moment, the gathering of women, dressed in white and black, adorned with ribbons and sashes, and carrying banners, offered a new form of delivery and a moment of amplification which was central to the efficacy of the rhetoric of the movement. While groups of women had gathered before in living rooms, churches, and conference halls, gathering to form a movement, this move to the streets sent a new message: the women's army, a metaphor borrowed from the gendered battle fields, had arrived to seek change, to seek a kind of political agency not yet offered them. Previously, to be seen on the street as a woman was to be seen in a female body, occupying female space—shopping, socializing, and tending to domestic chores. But, given the way the media had been reporting suffrage activities in the years prior to that 1913 march, these activists understood that some ways of being in public could be seen differently, as more entwined in the public life of the nation.

In fact, to walk on that same street carrying a banner, or adorned with a ribbon or a sash indicated her political position, her intent to speak in a system that prohibited the speech that her vote represented. The adornment that the wearable ephemera of ribbons and sashes offered these women an opportunity to deliver a rhetorical message with an amplified, collective voice, one that mimicked the gendered institution of the army as collective and singular of purpose. Whereas earlier bodily adornment of dress or jewelry was intended to beautify and play into the discourse of women's bodies as sexualized, this adornment allowed their bodies to be seen, not as sexual bodies, but as political ones. In her discussion of undocumented workers assembling in Los Angeles to claim rights to citizenship, Judith Butler argues that these workers' "labor is supposed to remain necessary and shrouded from view, and so when these laboring bodies emerge on the streets, acting like citizens, they make a mimetic claim to citizenship" (Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* 79). Similarly, women in the 1913 event, marching in rows and riding on cars, functioning as a whole, made their bodies visible in a way that echoed the male citizenry.

This gathering also offered a new means of delivery, whereby the singular voice standing to face the crowd is replaced by the crowd, moving in concert through an audience, rather than standing and presenting. Scholars like Buchanan have long studied the collaborative effort of movement leaders like Cady Stanton and Anthony, concluding that these women's rhetorical collaborations are useful as we consider "what their practices reveal about the process by which marginalized groups come to public voice" (158). The study of those leaders and voices has been significant to understand, certainly. Similarly, scholars like Halloran have studied large gatherings and pageants as rhetorical spectacle, offering a sense of the importance of moving rhetorical studies to consider spectacle as a means of delivery. I agree that considering the actions of large groups of people as rhetorical is an important move for the field. In particular, I find Sarah J. Moore's notions of spectacle in the 1913 Women's March useful, though it also helps me to see the limits. While the spectacle of the march focuses attention largely on the planned acts of the pageantry and tableau of the march, I argue that the embodied acts of large groups of participants, performing but not performers, offer a significant moment to consider the embodied practices of marginalized people as a group as something beyond spectacle. Scholars should consider how delivery and amplification are created by bodies and performance through wearing ephemera as feminist, collective rhetorical action. Indeed, this collaborative body of disenfranchised women, functioning as a collective voice, perhaps as much as the linguistic rhetoric offered by the speakers, offered a view of feminist work as collective work, as women's bodies acting together, identified and connected by the wearable items they made and wore, to move beyond the singular voice. In this way, women marching and protesting to participate fully in the political process are offering two strands of argument: first, they argue that women belong in the public sphere, engaged in matters of public discourse. By moving their bodies from the home and the domestic sphere, into the public sphere through conventions, public meetings, and marches, they offer an explicit argument about their place, about the need to engage publicly for the good of the community. Secondly, by doing this work together, appearing as a mass, identifiable by the ribbons and sashes they wore, these women were engaging in rhetorical amplification.

Conclusions

Women in the nineteenth century saw their lives tightly constrained by the gendered cultural norms of public life, restricting their access to rhetorical agency in the political work of the day. Those constraints were enacted largely on their bodily autonomy—where and how they could appear. As Carol Mattingly states so clearly, “[t]he construction of the decorated woman with tiny, restricted movements contributed to a visual pleasure firmly ensconced in nineteenth-century culture that worked against oratorical authority” (136). While operating within these strictures, women found ways to resist.

Many of the images associated with parades, marches, and other public events related to women’s suffrage depict large groups of women dressed in conservative, feminine dress. The proliferation of hats, long skirts, and high necklines, though, demonstrates not their unwillingness to challenge gendered norms of dress, but instead a canvas upon which to place political ephemera designed to make their bodies visible and aligned with the movement. First-wave feminists, then, in their work to achieve suffrage and a formalized voice in the arena of political discourse, acted in ways that can be seen as both cognizant of the dominant discourses about their bodies and resistant to those discourses. That this tactic of the movement to undo these embodied constraints turned to what women could do with their bodies demonstrates the deep knowledge of their cultural contexts. Parading and gathering while wearing identifiable protest ephemera created particular rhetorical effects designed to expand the movement and hasten its success. In fact, these activists worked to resist their constraints by taking up public space, both by being present in those spaces and by creating an amplified visual image with the tactical use of color and ephemera.

Considering the rhetorical effect of these women's bodies acting in concert with the wearable ephemera discussed here raises questions for contemporary study as we see the proliferation of similar wearable rhetoric in both protest events and everyday wear. Beyond the technological considerations of wearable rhetoric that many scholars today are considering, this historical study can offer us a framework for considering DIY wearable rhetorics today that reflect rhetorical aims. In the contemporary world, ribbons have accumulated political meaning in myriad of ways, with the specific color of simple ribbons being associated with specific causes or movements. Indeed, the current association of October as breast cancer awareness month has brought with it an overwhelming presence of pink ribbons, on everything from bodies to advertisements to products themselves. While the pink ribbon is perhaps the most well-known, many other causes have fostered an association with ribbon wearing, from aqua for ovarian cancer awareness, to blue for anti-bullying campaigns. The multitude of ribbons and colors currently worn and associated with a variety of causes raises questions about the rhetorical effectiveness of these wearable objects in performing awareness, given the complexities and masses of these objects. Sociologist Sarah Moore has offered a discussion of the wearing of these ribbons in her book *Ribbon Culture*, but her work picks up the story in the late twentieth century and seems to ignore any potential connection to women's suffrage.

Many activists, though, still find rhetorical import in wearable ephemera associated with movements or positions. In 2011, political activist and Christian theologian Jim Wallis believed that a wearable item could make political change. Frustrated with the ongoing Congressional cuts to programs that support programs aimed at helping low-income families, Wallis reported that a collective of church leaders had taken out an advertisement aiming a particular question, "What Would Jesus Cut?" at the Congressional leaders debating the budget. That ad was followed by "orange WWJC? bracelets [being] delivered to every member of Congress." To be sure, this activist group saw political potential in those bracelets, not only in the wearing, but in the challenge to lawmakers to wear them as well. Of course, the current presence of red Make America Great Again hats and the energetic discussion surrounding these wearable objects belies the truth of rhetorical impact, even as scholars and citizens may disagree about the underlying principles associated with the hats and the political aims of Donald Trump.

Considering the breadth of examples in historical as well as contemporary cases, the study of this rhetorical act of wearing ephemeral protest items offers significant implications for thinking about how marginalized voices can use their bodies and wearables in collective action, delivering a message with their bodies. Scholars and activists, then, should consider the role of such ephemera in their own campaigns. Can we see t-shirts, hats, or awareness ribbons today offering similar amplification and collaborative possibilities? Does the abundance of variety of wearables today dilute the rhetorical power of wearing? Can the rhetorical wearing of the suffragists offer guidance to contemporary social movements in organizing a visual, embodied rhetoric of wearing? While contemporary social movements and protests often take a more intersectional approach, the assemblage of wearable objects and marginalized bodies continues to support an emergent agency for groups seeking ideological change in various contexts. Scholars of social movements and visual rhetoric have many options for extending this work in a multitude of directions.

CHAPTER III

FISTS AND FIGURES:

PERFORMING BLACKNESS, CITIZENSHIP, AND RESISTANCE

> The white media's propagation of the myth of race-based black athletic superiority is a key link in the chain placed around black people's minds relative to sport. —Harry Edwards, "The Olympic Project for Human Rights: An Assessment Ten Years Later," 1979

> And despite everything, the body remains. —Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*

That Tommie Smith had won the 200-meter race in the 1968 Summer Olympics was no surprise. His performance in the weeks and months up to that moment had forecasted his athletic achievement. Expected, too, was the success of his U. S. teammate John Carlos who, winning bronze, shared the medal podium as the U.S. national anthem began to play. What came as a surprise to the crowd in Mexico City and the sports announcers commentating the event was the appearance of the two athletes as they walked to that podium, wearing black socks, carrying shoes, donning beads and pins that announced their allegiance to a movement named the Olympic Project for Human Rights, each wearing one black leather glove from the same pair. As the opening notes of the anthem began, the athletes offered another surprise, one that would become a more actively deliberated story than their athletic performance. As the men opted against the anticipated performative pose of hand over heart, and instead bowed their heads and raised their gloved hands in what would become one of the most famous gestures of the

20th century, they embodied and performed in ways that were both lauded and criticized. They intervened in what had been, and would continue to be, a decades-long conversation about what embodied actions and what symbols were culturally acceptable for black bodies, particularly black, male, athletic bodies. This chapter examines both the ephemerality and the durability of this historical moment, considering the immediate public responses to the act and the icon that recirculated from that act, how its memory has continued in the form of the retelling (sometimes revising) of the story, and the historical and ongoing circulation of the action and the image of a raised fist.

Historical Context of Black Bodies in the U.S.

Like the white women working to achieve suffrage in the 19th and 20th centuries, black people in the United States have for generations found themselves outside of the power structure. Living and working in a society built by and for white men, white women and men and women of color have struggled since this country's founding to achieve the right to participate fully in a system designed to keep them marginalized. Though activities to support the political agency of both white women and black women and men have aligned in some moments, particularly in the 21st century context of intersectional activism, historically these social movements supporting the rights of white women and the rights of black people developed independently, in part because white women, as benefactors of white supremacy, impeded the possibility of alliances designed to achieve racial justice. While white supremacy constrains the lives of both white women and black people, those constraints often meted out through their bodies, the constraints have historically functioned differently for each group. In this chapter, I consider how the ideology of white supremacy prevalent in the founding of this country constructed black bodies as threatening and in need of taming by powerful institutional forces and how in the mid-20th century the resulting doxa shaped both the protest activities that black bodies performed and the responses to them.

Ideologies of white supremacy have long shaped public discourse surrounding black and brown bodies in the United States. The historical reliance on the enslavement of black bodies in this country reinforced the desire to control and direct the bodily workings of black bodies in the service of white bodies and white institutions. Though the construct of slavery was legally undone generations ago, the echoes of the ideology of white supremacy, founded on an understanding of black bodies as powerful, threatening, and unruly, have persisted, influencing the relationship between citizenship, freedom, and racial identity for hundreds of years. In responding to this context, various social movements associated with racial equity and justice have intentionally highlighted the black body as a means of resistance. In particular, the modern Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s relied profoundly on the bodies of black people. Whether those bodies were not showing up (as in the case of the Montgomery Bus Boycott) or showing up in mass (as in the case of the March to Selma), the bodies themselves signified the movement and allowed the national community, particularly the white community, to record and comment on the actions of those bodies and thus the movement itself. Certainly, historical images of black bodies marching, sitting, singing, and otherwise gathering in groups reveal the significance of bodies to a social justice movement designed to win freedom from injustice and an active role in the political process in the United States.

In the context of these discourses that construct black bodies as unruly or dangerous, individual citizens, activists, and movement leaders began acting in ways, both intentionally and unintentionally, that called attention to black bodies and the discourse around black bodies while simultaneously challenging those discourses. In protest activities of all sorts, including planned events as well as spontaneous moments, bodies acted. Of the many examples of the ways black bodies act in resistance to established power dynamics, one of the most enduring symbols of the black body in action is that of the raised fist. Though once thought of as the symbol of a socialistic solidarity and more recently adopted by a wide range of social movements, the raised fist is perhaps best known by most people as a representation of the Black Power movement of the late 1960s and 1970s in the United States. In historicizing the embodied act of raising a fist in the context of the 1968 Olympics as well as the sometimes disembodied symbol of a raised fist, I aim to follow Richard Marback's assertion that "rhetoric is not static, it is dynamic and fluid, an event and an embodied encounter of humans with objects" (63). Thus, I want to consider the rhetorical significance of the act and the symbol, both as an ephemeral act of resistance and as a more enduring synecdoche, whereby the fist represents not only the individual body, but also the larger body of a resisting group or movement. In this chapter, I argue that black bodies performing resistance in the form of a raised fist function rhetorically in two significant ways: First, raising a fist subverts the narrative of the black body by enacting power in a calm, quiet stance. Secondly, this embodied action creates a kind of embodied call and response protest act, creating a synecdoche that can then move across moments, identities, and space both as action and icon. While the call and response in gospel music gets an immediate response, in this instance, the response to the call comes in the form of raised fists and fist icons on a range of material objects, creating durability for the ephemeral moment of protest. In this way, I argue the raised fist is both a successful rhetorical tool of resistance and one that risks being appropriated in ways that may run counter to black power.

Situating the Fist in Theory and History

Social Movement Theory. Social movement studies focus largely on acts designed to create change in a society or community, often considering how movements can create a sense of Burkean identification or consubstantiality. This chapter seeks to combine a feminist approach to agency and disruption with the performative element of raising a fist to consider how change may (or may not) occur. While particular cases of fist raising appear to originate from individual acts or small-scale collectives, the enduring nature of the symbol of a raised fist suggests that the act and the icon have a role to play in social movement rhetoric on a larger scale. Edward Corbett, writing in the midst of the social shifts of the late 1960s, recognized how what he called "muscular rhetoric" or "body rhetoric" was in some ways supplanting the more traditional verbal efforts at persuasion (291). In this way, Corbett and his contemporaries were considering how collaborative or collective acts of rhetoric could function in a civic context, offering an early connection between the scholarship of rhetorical studies and social movement studies. Indeed, my analysis of the response to a raised fist and the revision and circulation of the act and the symbol requires consideration of the cross-disciplinary work on social movements, feminist theory, performativity, with an eye toward the rhetorical strategies and effects of the protest by Smith and Carlos.

As with my study of embodied protest rhetoric as a strategy of women's suffrage, in considering the embodied protest at the 1968 Olympics, I ask how embodied protest rhetoric creates what scholars sometimes refer to as a "cultural effect." Part of this consideration begins with how rhetorical strategies can alter the way an issue or a group is perceived by the larger culture (Stewart, Smith, and Denton). In this, Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow offer a significant starting point, as I consider how the meaning of the Olympic protest is interpreted by various parties and the extent to which it is part of a frame for collective action, "action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities" (614). Part of this analysis must recognize the Olympics as a significant part of the protest, considering the role of space and occasion. In this way, I am influenced by Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and her study of how institutional habitats, her term for the "spaces where women advocates of equality can assemble, where discussion can occur, and where the organizing for institutional change can originate," (197) may influence activists' actions. While Katzenstein challenges the idea that institutionalization is deradicalizing, considering her case studies of feminists working within the military and the Catholic Church, I will consider the implications of the Olympic protest, specifically as it is read through the "institutional habitat" of international sports competition.

Beyond the consideration of the space and occasion of the protest, this chapter will investigate the circulation of the fist, both as an act and as an icon. Debra C. Minkoff's work tracing historical shifts in the tactics of movements is useful here. While her study considers how a social movement may echo or take on the actions or choices of previous movements, focusing on the organizational activities within the civil rights movements, I assert that the same kinds of influences can be traced through ephemeral actions and symbols. Like Minkhoff, I am also influenced here by Doug McAdam's work on initiator and spin-off movements. While McAdam focuses on how "[i]nitiator movements…provide a cultural or cognitive signal to others" (Minkhoff 781), I see the Olympic protest and the later reenactments and use of the fist icon as examples of acts within a movement that can be seen as an initiators and spin-off actions.

Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and Performativity. I approach this work as a feminist scholar interested in how social change engages questions of embodiment, including intersections of gender, race, and sexuality. While scholarship does not always engage it, bodies are central to social movements and protests. I begin by attending to the entrenched cultural beliefs about black bodies. Those discourses, Foucault reminds us, construct those bodies as subjects with a defined relationship to institutions. That relationship, in the case of black bodies, often focuses on control and power. Reminded, of course, of Bordo's assertion that "the body is…a medium of culture," I discuss in this chapter the earliest development of discourse about black bodies in the United States. In "Docile Bodies," Foucault takes on the question of bodies and gesture directly: "Disciplinary control does not consist simply in teaching or imposing a series of particular gestures; it imposes the best relations between a gesture and the overall position of the body" (152). The cultural doxa around bodies manages both the existence of bodies and the gesture, or performance, of bodies in spaces. Of course, while Foucault's work on bodies and power is instructive here, I also acknowledge the limits of his work. Just as Angela King argues that Foucault's "concept of power cries out for gender specific analysis and in that analysis gender needs to be acknowledged as a technology of the body in its own right" (22), so does race need to be considered. Clearly, the cultural discipline imposed on bodies in the United States requires more than an essentialist "bodies" approach, with the presumption of a white, male body. In this way, I am attempting an intersectional analysis, in the spirit of Amy Brandzel, "to tease out the ways in which discourses on race, sexuality, gender, class, ability, nation, and Indigeneity require and rely upon presumptive conceptual information about other categories of difference" (17). In this chapter, I am specifically interested in how people with black bodies experience the effects of an historical and ongoing discourse which constructs black and brown bodies in very particular ways related to abilities, threats, expectations, and freedoms. Those bodies are regulated and monitored more closely than bodies coded as white. In investigating how cultural power structures have relied on and reproduced narratives that suggest that black bodies are unruly and need to be controlled, scholarship on the black experience informs my analysis of the raised fist.

While many scholars working in various interdisciplinary fields focus their work on the effects of these discourses about black bodies, Elizabeth Alexander captures a significant focus of that work. In her article following the Rodney King beating and subsequent critical conversations on the public discourse surrounding that event, Alexander reminds us that “Black boys and men present a particular kind of physical threat in the white American imagination, a threat that must be contained” (90). The physical threat assigned to black male bodies exists today, but of course is the descendant of a long historical focus on control of those bodies. Even a cursory study of the U.S. slave trade, including slave narratives or ads for runaway slaves will reinforce Ronald L. Jackson’s assertion that “the politicization and scripting of Black bodies has been a common thread of American life since at least the seventeenth century forward” (12). From the heinous conditions in which black bodies were forcibly transported to the United States to the vigorous and ongoing physical brutality used to maintain bodily control over enslaved men, women, and children, the black body has long been treated as a site of violence, control, and subjugation. Of course, these discourses and violences did not end with the institution of slavery. In her text considering the relationship between generations of discourse around black bodies and the policing of those bodies, Rima Vesely-Flad asserts that “[e]ven when the actions of Black people appear nonthreatening, the bodies of Black people are deemed dangerous….These Black men are killed because their dark skin symbolizes moral and physical danger. Several centuries of discourse on Black bodies as morally polluting entities has resulted in perpetual subjugation and harassment by government officials” (Vesely-Flad xvi). Contemporary discussions of racial justice often recognize the role of this discourse about black bodies in the treatment and policing of those same bodies. Given the longstanding nature of this cultural discourse about black bodies and the feminist work to intervene in those discourses, this analytical approach can also be productive in considering historical events related to justice issues and protest movements. As a result, I argue that historicizing the way these discourses function in specific protest moments can offer a useful lens through which to study both the ephemerality of embodied acts and the durability and recirculation of those acts.

When black bodies, then, perform in resistant ways in public spaces, they are directly resisting ongoing discourses, interrupting those discourses in an attempt to garner agency, and ultimately, change. Beginning a look at the circulation of the fist with the situation of the Olympics offers a way to consider the narrowly defined expectations of bodies in that space and the resistance of these two men in interrupting those expectations. Nedra Reynolds' view of agency holds particular resonance for my work: "Agency is not simply about finding one's own voice but also about intervening in discourses of the everyday and cultivating rhetorical tactics that make interruption and resistance an important part of any conversation" (59). Kathleen Ryan, Rebecca Jones, and Nancy Myers similarly highlight how "[i]nterruptions from members of counterpublics become agentive ways to transform values" (25). Smith and Carlos raising their fists in a moment when the script of acceptable behavior is narrow and specific highlights the disruption of the dominant discourses about black bodies and appropriate actions, enacting a means of rhetorical resistance to unjust conditions.

In this way, this chapter approaches the 1968 Olympic Protest with attention to the context, in the spirit of J.L. Austin's examination of the performance of the speech act in *How to Do Things with Words*. While Austin's work on performativity focuses on utterances with less emphasis on embodied acts, his approach stresses that scholars "must consider the total situation in which the utterance is issued—the total speech-act—if we are to see the parallel between statements and performative utterances, and how each can go wrong" (52). My focus recognizes that performativity functions both to generate a sense of identity for an individual or group and to counter an existing identity, reflecting a number of contemporary scholars considering performativity not only as it relates to speech acts, but also in embodied acts, both individual and collective.

One of the most significant aspects of performativity studies for my work is that which explores how the public performance of a group or individual can create a sense of identification, one that can both reflect an identity that is preexisting and create a new sense of collective identity. For instance, Butler's foundational work in *Excitable Speech* and *Gender Trouble* established the understanding that gender as an identity exists primarily as a result of the performances of gender. Certainly, our public understanding of what constitutes "woman," for instance, grows from performances marked as normative and held up for public approval. Of course, racialized identities and embodiments are similarly performative. Both race and gender, to be sure, transform our embodied performances, both reflecting and materializing our understandings of these identity markers in the process. The significance of performance in creating social norms for various groups intersects the work of Peggy Phelan as she considers the interplay between politics and representation. Phelan is particularly interested in "the relationship between the self and the other as it is represented in photographs, paintings, films, theatre, political protests, and performance art" (4). While Phelan is primarily focused on offering a feminist psychoanalytical approach that goes beyond the scope of my project, a broad consideration of visibility and the individual and collective representation created in the public performance of raising a fist offers a productive lens for this chapter.

Finally, in considering the way bodies act together, I consider the effects of being visible and being seen. The Olympic protest intersects with ideas raised in Butler's *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* and Moten's *In the Break*. Butler argues that

> when bodies assemble on the street, in the square, or in other forms of public space (including virtual ones) they are exercising a plural and performative right to appear, one that asserts and instates the body in the midst of the political field, and which, in its expressive and signifying function, delivers a bodily demand for a more livable set of economic, social, and political conditions no longer afflicted by induced forms of precarity. (11)

In considering the "right to appear," Butler offers a way to consider the visibility of black bodies in public spaces where expectations of behavior are deeply embedded, particularly that of the sports arena. In his rich work on black aesthetics and the black tradition in *In the Break*, Moten takes up the aesthetics of performance, and in this allows a move from the "right to appear" to the effect of being seen. In addition to Moten's musings on blackness and performance, with a particular focus on improvisation and the performance of resistance, his comments on the "eruptive content of a transferred history" present in the gaze (185) provide a means of considering the power of the performative stance on the podium. The moment on the podium, contextualized, embodied, and performative, required a response from those looking on—and that response can inform an understanding of the action in the moment and how the icon reminiscent of the action gained durability.

In considering the use of symbols in a social movement, I first consider a brief overview of the fist as a symbol. Like many other icons of collective protest and resistance movements, the act and image of a raised fist has for generations functioned as a symbol of a political movement or ideological collectivity. Scholars have traced some early uses of the fist to socialist and communist movements of the early 20th century, signifying a unifying power of workers against institutional power.[12] Perhaps one of the most rhetorically significant effects of this symbol in the context of World War I was the notion of a collectivity working in solidarity. While independent groups of workers and class-minded people were acting in relatively isolated events around the world, the fist functioned as a symbol connecting these isolated events. The idea of solidarity of workers, represented in a somewhat abstracted image of a fist, rather than a more racially or nationally identifiable symbol, became a powerful rallying image in a moment in when international political conflict was heightening. Between this early 20th century moment of global conflict and the unrest of the mid-century race conflict in the United States, other symbols and icons appeared in various movements, but the image of the fist found another significantly resonant moment a few decades later.

[12] Many scholars have written about the rhetoric of hand symbols in history, including the clenched fist. While this chapter does not allow the time or space to fully discuss the history of the fist as a symbol of solidarity related to communist and socialist political action in the early part of the 20th century, I note here that this history suggests a longstanding association of this embodied act with the notion of collectivity and collective action based on a common identity or ideology. For a more robust overview of the use of the fist to associate with worker's movements and communist ideology in the U.S., see Simmons (2000), Korff (1992), and Sawer (2007). In addition to this short list, there is also a large set of scholarship on the fist as a symbol in various transnational justice movements.

Though the origins of the act of raising a closed fist may be situated in the context of political and economic arguments related to the socialist movement, for many people today, the symbol of the fist is most often associated with the Black Power Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s in the United States. In considering the development of this icon as a symbol for that movement, we must first focus not on the disembodied icon with which so many are familiar, but instead on the embodied act of raising a fist, beginning with what is arguably the most significant public moment of fist-raising by black bodies, situated in a profoundly volatile year in the history of the United States, 1968. While this was a year in which protest was widespread and certainly there may be earlier examples of African-Americans raising a fist in protest or solidarity, the most prominent historical example of the raised fist occurred at the 1968 Mexico Olympics when two black athletes from the United States raised gloved fists during their medal ceremony. This moment, often considered one of the most overtly political moments in Olympic history (Hartmann), established the raised fist as a symbol of black power. The solidification of this symbol in the public imaginary occurred not simply as a result of the intentions of the athletes, but importantly as a result of the bodies that raised those fists. The cultural and historical tumult of 1968 helps explain why this moment has persisted in memory when others have faded. Not only has the memory of this event endured, but the embodied act associated with that event has persisted and re-circulated, becoming one of the most recognizable symbols of justice movements of all types since that August day in 1968. Following J. L. Austin's argument that we must consider the "total situation" in which the performance exists, I argue below that the blackness of the bodies in a space designed in part to erase individual identity spoke more loudly than the act itself, even as those bodies have been erased completely from the act in more recent, abstracted iterations of the symbol of a raised fist.

Raising Fists as Embodied Protest

The fist as a symbol of Black Power and race politics stems most directly from this moment in 1968. Of course, as Austin reminds us, “the occasion of an utterance matters seriously” (100). Given the fraught political and cultural moment of 1968, including ongoing Civil Rights activism and steady media coverage of the Vietnam War, the public and popular occasion of the Olympic Games provides fertile ground for activists seeking visibility for their cause. Given that the Modern Olympic Games had existed at that point for decades, audiences knew what they expected from the event: a series of remarkable athletic performances, each demonstrating significant bodily control and discipline, followed by performative national pride, as winners display patriotic pride atop podiums, surrounded by waving flags and the sound of national anthems. As a rhetorical event, the performative expectations had been set and offered a guaranteed global audience that activists recognized as a stage for more than athletic achievement.

So, when Tommy Smith and John Carlos, two black athletes representing the United States at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico, took to the podium during the medal ceremony for the 200m race and raised gloved fists into the air while bowing their heads, the performances conflicted with the expectations of the various audiences involved. Many looking on, in person or through the numerous video and photographic representations that followed, saw the act as a decisive, and perhaps aggressive, statement, part of a larger movement for black power. Indeed, many today see this moment as the initiating event for the affiliation of the Black Power Movement with the raised fist. The complexity of the act and the various effects of the act, however, can be debated by scholars concerned with sports, social movement, critical race studies, and embodied rhetorics. While the relationship to the Black Power Movement is undeniable, my concern is with the effect of the act, both in the immediate moment and in the way that act became recirculated and ultimately gained a durability perhaps not initially anticipated. What allowed this moment to become enshrined in public memory and in movement history? How did this ephemeral moment gain the durability it did? What are the effects of the recirculation of the event and the revision that accompanies that recirculation over decades?

In order to consider the act in its entirety, we must first consider the context of the moment. While many looking on that day (or in the decades that followed) believed the act to be the spontaneous choice of two athletes, this moment was in fact part of a larger movement that had been planned and considered for some time, one that was not narrowly related to the Black Panther Party or the Black Power Movement as they existed in 1968. Harry Edwards, now Professor Emeritus of the University of California, Berkeley Sociology Department, reminds us that "The 'Olympic Project for Human Rights' was launched in November of 1967 to advocate a black boycott of the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games" (2). Organized as an attempt to connect the issues of sports and politics in an overt way, the OPHR had broad intentions and was supported by a range of individuals and groups, both black and white. Indeed, present in the now infamous podium photo, though not as obvious as the raised fists, are badges on all three athletes, markers of this project. Edwards, in his retrospective of the event 10 years later, identifies the goals of the OPHR with specificity:

> Its major aims were: (1) to stage an international protest of the persistent and systematic violation of black people's human rights in the United States; (2) to expose America's historical exploitation of black athletes as political propaganda tools in both the national and international arenas; (3) to establish a standard of political responsibility among black athletes vis- à-vis the needs and interests of the black community, and to devise effective and acceptable ways by which athletes could accommodate the demands of such responsibilities; and (4) to make the black community aware of the substantial 'hidden' dynamics and consequences of their sports involvement. (2)

The Olympic Project for Human Rights, then, was not a spontaneous venture. It was, rather, a well-considered, intentional movement designed to capitalize on the popularity and visibility of sport, particularly on the international stage, in order to bring visibility to injustice and exploitation affecting people of color, particularly athletes of color, particularly athletes from the United States. In this way, Edwards and the other organizers of this project were clearly aware of part of the longstanding discourse about black bodies that narrowly constructed their usefulness. While slavery and the plantation economy had been legally undone in previous generations, these activists were keenly aware of the echoes of that system in a sports context in which the performances of black bodies prop up the economic and cultural power of a primarily white leadership and ownership. As a response, the OPHR called for a boycott to disrupt that system by creating a noticeable absence of black bodies and their performance in the form of athletic labor on the competitive fields of the Olympics.

Prior to the Games, as Edwards and other activists sought support for their cause, the OPHR found support from groups both expected and unexpected. One of the most notable allies in the cause was the Harvard Crew team, representing in many ways the height of privilege in the athletic world. Several of these Harvard athletes publicly discussed their position, announcing their support for the cause and their aim to help white athletes understand the struggles and goals of the black athletes weeks before the Games (Dew, Kramer). In addition to individual statements or actions, a July 1968 document housed in the archives at the National Museum of American History demonstrates the Harvard athletes' clear, full-throated support of the cause of racial justice espoused by the OPHR, while also aiming to maintain a sense of distance from any particular protest actions. In this moment, the team noted their "moral commitment to support" the black athletes, while also clarifying their intention to avoid joining a boycott (Dew). The statement expresses "hope there might grow a meaningful demonstration on the part of the entire United States Olympic Team of support for the just cause of the black man in America" (Larkin). While the support for the cause is clear, the group of white athletes seems to maintain a comfortable distance from anything too disruptive, stating that they had "no intention or desire to embarrass our country or to use athletics for ulterior purposes" (Larkin). These responses remind us of the powerful nature of cultural discourses around appropriateness and performance, setting the stage for responses to Smith and Carlos in October.

In fact, this response to the planned action demonstrates both the complexity of the context and the potential effectiveness of the OPHR campaign and plan for a boycott, aiming to bring the concerns of a marginalized groups to a more powerful privileged group. Even in their support, though, the Harvard athletes used language that continues to marginalize the black athletes. In his statement, the team captain, Curt Canning, stated that he believed that "the most effective demonstration would be a 'joint one which whites could join because of something called good taste'" (qtd in Kramer). Associating the white athletes with "good taste" reminds readers that political support would continue to rely on a discourse that constructed the black body and its actions as separate from "good taste." Any disruption of an institutionalized event would never be seen by the white majority as "in good taste," but it might "force others to pay attention" (Reynolds 60). These white athletes, then, may have recognized the issues at hand and may have been open to showing support, but their own language both relied on and reinforced a discourse of separation and hierarchy.

Once the decision was made not to boycott, Edwards and some of the 200 athletes who supported the OPHR (Jackson) began to consider other acts to achieve a measure of recognition for their cause. Hartmann offers a robust tracing of the events of this time, asserting that "[i]f they couldn't change people's minds, the OPHR activist-athletes believe they could at least use their status as athletes and future Olympians to force mainstream Americans to acknowledge the issues they cared about" (94). In fact, while the full boycott did not materialize, U.S. runners Smith and Carlos were moved by the plan. They decided to use their moment on the medal stand to highlight their black bodies, while also adding a performance that connected their winning athletic performances to a political stance on rights and justice. From the vantage point of the 21st

century moment in which contemporary athletic protests are widely discussed in the public sphere,[13] a closer consideration of the historical context in which this moment arose alongside a look at contemporaneous responses may help us unpack the rhetorical effects, both immediate and lasting, of the ephemeral moment. Within the world of athletics and sport, the response in the moment included some rather tepid support along with decisive condemnation of the act. These responses reveal the power of the embodied rhetoric and hint at the reasons for its long-standing circulation and use in a variety of justice movements.

Turning to the act and the visual built from the act on that October day in 1968, we can see the ways the image was built includes more than the raised fist itself. With a combination of embodied performance and the presence of material objects, the men strike a pose that has endured both for its starkness and for the response that followed. In fact, the image offers a complex and challenging message, both for a 1968 audience and for contemporary historians and scholars: two of three men on the podium, acknowledged for their outstanding athletic performance and representing their country, look somber.

[13] Perhaps most notably, since the kneeling protests by Colin Kaepernick and other professional athletes in the U.S. began in 2016, dozens of articles and essays have appeared in a wide swath of media and scholarship debating the appropriateness of the act of kneeling during the National Anthem at professional sporting events. While a variety of athletes and others in the public eye support the act as a means of calling attention to the ongoing racial injustice at play in this country, the tenor of many of these stories, particularly those referring to Kaepernick and others as ungrateful or out of line, suggests that the political and racial context of 1968 is not as far as we would like to think from the context of our contemporary world.

Figure 8. Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the 1968 Olympic Games. Photo by John Dominis for *Time/Life*

They stand with eyes turned down and fists raised. Situated atop the medal stands with shoes removed, in black socks, representing the experience of black poverty, the men embodied a vision of blackness that reflected both adherence to the cultural expectations of those bodies in that moment—wearing Olympic gear and medals reflecting their outstanding physical feat—while simultaneously representing the cultural struggles of black bodies in the United States. Smith and Carlos each wore beads around their necks symbolizing the lynching of black bodies in the South. They each wore a single black glove (as they reportedly had only one pair between them), and as the “Star Spangled Banner” began playing, each raised the gloved hand, closed into a fist, above his head. The men bowed their heads at that moment in a somber act, designed, according to Carlos in an interview conducted many years later, to signal the sadness they felt given the racial injustice they had experienced and witnessed (Sporting Witness). In that moment, the act of raising their fists, gloved in black, while bowing their heads created myriad rhetorical effects. While audible signs of disapproval emanated from the crowd in that moment, the full effects of their rhetorical choices were not fully clear immediately.

In this context, the decision by Smith and Carlos to enact a protest at the games was sure to elicit a response. In fact, many had already begun to assess the political motivations of the athletes, weeks and even months before the games. Given the cultural and political upheaval of 1968, public declarations of concern about racial justice and other social justice issues were relatively common. In this context, many people were involved in activist activities, and those who were not involved were at least aware of the ongoing issues as reported and depicted in popular culture and media. So, even beyond the athletic community, the broader public was aware of the political ideologies at play, and judgments were already being made. In fact, the cover of *Newsweek* magazine (see figure 9) for the week of July 15, 1968, a full three months before the protest, featured the image of a running Tommie Smith with the headline, “The Angry Black Athlete.” Smith's views were already known, and the national magazine created a cover that framed him in relation to those views alongside his athleticism. The small print beneath that headline identifies the athlete as “Champion Sprinter Tommie Smith.” The reference to his success as a runner is minimized, as the difference in font size and color contrast highlight the cover message framing Smith as angry. With the headline situated alongside Smith’s muscular, running body, the magazine contributes to a framing of Smith as a threat--an angry black man.

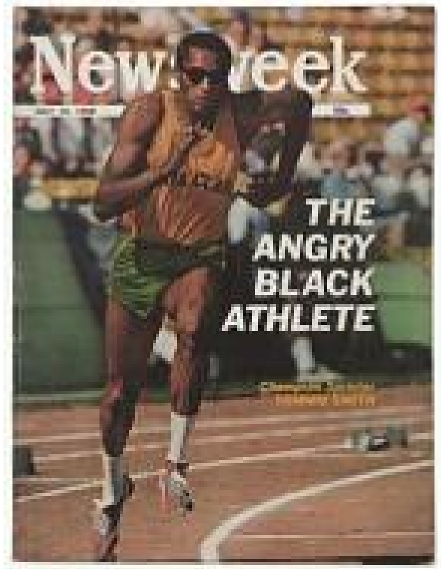

Figure 9. Angry Black Athlete Cover of *Newsweek,* July 1968.

With this discourse already in play, public responses to the podium event quickly solidified around two primary interpretations of Smith and Carlos's act. The immediate responses in the sports world, from both Olympic officials and commentators, were both abrupt and lasting, offering strong condemnation. Other journalists, civil rights leaders, and various individuals both in the United States and elsewhere offered more varied responses, including support and understanding of the act and its effect. Beginning in the moment, in audio from the day, nearly immediate groans can be heard from the crowd in Mexico City as Smith and Carlos lifted their fists and bowed their heads. The interpretation of this act as out of place was swift, and certainly, that acknowledgement was due to the bodies performing the act. Given the reaction of the crowd to the act, John Carlos recognized immediately that there would be repercussions, saying later, "I knew it was going to be rough waters from the moment we left the victory stand" (qtd in Sporting Witness).

As Carlos anticipated, the crowd response was not the only reaction. Within days, both men were ousted from U.S. Team by the U.S. Olympic Committee. The statement explaining their ouster called their behavior "untypical exhibitionism" and "immature behavior." This swift ousting demonstrates the significance of the moment culturally. Described as "exhibitionism" by the U.S. Olympic Committee, Smith and Carlos acted in a manner described honestly as understated, in that their performance offered a silent and still protest. Other black athletes at those games had attempted protest at their medal ceremonies, wearing berets, appearing barefoot, or rolling up their pants to expose tall black socks (Sheehan), but only Smith and Carlos garnered the response of the crowd and the decision to disassociate the clearly talented athletes from the U.S. Olympic Committee and Team. This distinct response for these two men underscores the actions of the body and the narrow constraints around what black bodies were allowed to do in public in the historical and cultural context. The USOC, then, could be seen as meting out Foucauldian punishment to these men for having used their bodies in unacceptable ways, an obvious reflection on the policing of these bodies in public spaces. Not only would there be punishment, but the punishment would be as public as the protest, reminding both the athletes and the larger public, of the violation. Beyond the expulsion from the games, this policing and punishment continued as within days of being ousted from the Olympic Team and sent home, the athletes began to receive death threats.

The roots of this discipline can be found in the institutional response to the act. Just one day after the medal ceremony protest, the official statement from the United States Olympic Committee appears, referencing Smith and Carlos, though not by name, and announcing the immediate punishment for the act:

> The United States Olympic Committee expresses its profound regrets to the International Olympic Committee, to the Mexican Organizing Committee and to the people of Mexico for the discourtesy displayed by two members of its team in departing from tradition during a Victory Ceremony at the Olympic Stadium on 6th October. The untypical exhibitionism of these athletes also violates the basic standards of sportsmanship and good manners which are so highly regarded in the United States and therefore the two men involved are suspended forthwith from the team and ordered to remove themselves from the Olympic Village. (qtd. in Spies-Gans)

The language in this statement offers a lens through which to see the moment. First, the statement makes no mention of the issues around which the performance was organized—justice, poverty, racism. Though the Olympic Charter for 1968 suggests that a significant goal of the Games and the Olympic Movement was to "make better and happier citizens" and to "demonstrate the principles of fair play," (Olympic Charter—1968, 4-5), the IOC is uninterested in the suffering of some citizens that Carlos and Smith were aiming to attend to. Instead, their attention focuses directly on the embodied response to these justice issues.

Secondly, the statement reveals that the primary concern was not at all with the mission of the organization or the perpetuation of fairness in member nations, but instead with normative behavior. In the statement, then, the word "discourtesy" carries particular import, as it suggests the normative expectation of courtesy for the athletes and the impetus for the disciplinary action of expulsion. Of course, by all accounts, the performance of these athletes on the track was praiseworthy. They had performed as their culture demanded, outrunning the competition, thereby demonstrating the appropriate discipline of their black bodies. Additionally, their behavior on the medal stand was quiet. And yet, their act was deemed “discourteous.” Accordingly, given the comparative quietness of the “display” provided by Smith and Carlos, one must locate the discourtesy in the act of raising a hand. Though this act did not in fact interrupt the ceremony, occurring as it did during the U.S. National Anthem, still the U.S. Olympic Committee found it discourteous and deserving of swift and decisive response by the governing institution of the Olympics.

A closer look at the visual created in this moment highlights the narrow view of acceptable behavior and its specific focus on the raised fist. In his consideration of what this moment may tell us about the intersection of race and athletics, historian Douglas Hartmann, argues that “…it was not at all clear what import, if any, their demonstration was intended to have for concrete, political action…..Thus, the gesture was full of paradox and ambiguity: at once subversive and respectful, silent but resounding, seemingly empty of political content, on the one hand, yet packed with meaning and significance on the other” (25). Certainly the tableau of that performance offers, as Hartmann suggests, a complicated image for that moment. The raised fist, reminiscent of the image of workers’ solidarity, suggested a sense of collectivity, with the two men acting in unison. While the third man on the podium, Peter Norman of Australia, did not raise a hand, like Smith and Carlos, he wore the OPHR badge on his shirt, suggesting solidarity without the raised fist. In fact, prior to the ceremony, Smith and Carlos reportedly told Norman of their intention to “do something far greater than any athletic feat,” and Norman asked to have a badge to wear in support (qtd. in Gazzaniga). In fact, Norman, too, suffered for the act, though most media coverage ignored his presence. Though not officially censured, his return to Australia brought employment struggles and ostracism, in his personal life and as a professional athlete (Gazzaniga). Attention to his participation largely centers around the memory of the event, as decades later, a series of articles were published in various outlets to raise the profile of the white man in the photo, and it was at this time that his support for the gesture became more widely known.[14] The focus on Norman, taking place largely during the final years of the administration of the first black president in U.S. history and as racial tensions were intensifying, could be read not only as an historical clarification of the moment, but also as an attempt to assert the importance of the lone white man in the image as a means of re-centering this historically significant moment on the white experience of allyship. Significantly to the study of the rhetoric, though, this story has not ultimately overshadowed the act of Smith and Carlos.

These responses, and the distinction between the reactions to Smith and Carlos and to Norman, indicated the import of the body performing. This assessment can be tied to a different kind of interruption, one that disrupts the narrative of the black body. Indeed, if, as Jackson argues, "it is about how the treatment of Black *bodies* as

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[14] In addition to the *Griot* article by Italian writer Gazzaniga, articles appeared in numerous media outlets, including *Time*, *Salon*, CNN and others between 2012 and 2017. Like Gazzaniga's essay, most of these stories framed their narratives around the "lesser-known" man in the photo, suggesting that Carlos and Smith had been firmly ensconced in history, while Norman suffered anonymity. These articles were followed by the 2017 creation of a statue honoring Norman and his action of support for Smith and Carlos. Additionally, Smith and Carlos have spoken about their appreciation and respect for Norman's support and actions in 1968.

commodities has persisted for hundreds of years and continues today," (12) then we can read this disruption as one that resists the attempt to construct Smith and Carlos simply as voiceless commodities, without the right to speak beyond their athletic performances. In this way, the description of the act as "discourteous" can be read as a racialized expectation applied to two men of color in a way that highlights the wrongness of those bodies, acting in that way in that moment. By resisting the expectations of their context, Smith and Carlos offer a performance that, more significantly than disrupting the ceremony, disrupts the discourse about appropriate actions of black male bodies in the space of an Olympic medal podium. When Nedra Reynolds, revising Stuart Hall's notion of interruption in theory, considers how marginalized groups may use interruption as a tool of agency, she notes that "[i]nterruption has often been interpreted as rude behavior, especially for women and children" (59). In the same way that women and children have been historically marginalized and had limited access to agency in their own lives, black men have lived in a narrowly prescriptive set of expectations for their behavior, and have been disciplined in a variety of violent ways for the failure to enact those expected roles.

While Smith and Carlos, as black men, may have been aiming to highlight an affective experience of pain and sadness associated with racial injustice and a breach of human rights, the USOC expected only courtesy, and perhaps, a sense of satisfaction and happiness at the ceremony—performative success and patriotism. In this way, we see the clashing of notions of collectivity: the USOC demanding collective allegiance with sport, with nation, and the OPHR performing collective concern with race and injustice. The nature of the collectivity being built then, not the fact of collectivity itself, created the tension and ultimately the backlash against the athletes, as it centered the marginalization and pain of black bodies and decentered the powerful institutions of nation and sport. The image, then, of two male black bodies raising fists in the air specifically evoked Black Power, particularly as those bodies enact their own independent embodiment, performing in ways that reflected their own lived experiences and resisted the expectation of controlled, scripted actions. While the two athletes were determined to embody their lived experiences, their long planning for the moment and their association with the OPHR (embodied by the badge each wore) demonstrated the ways in which they saw the issue in broader terms. In their performance, then, they communicated a sense of blackness that reflected not only their abilities on the track, but their engagement with and concern around issues of justice affecting black and brown athletes representing not only the United States, but also other countries participating in the Olympic Games.

In addition to the response by the U.S. Olympic Committee, media responses largely concurred, reflecting a larger cultural discourse about normative expectations for athletes. While some athletes supported the actions of Smith and Carlos, most contemporaneous media response critiqued the performance, and some of this reaction also highlighted that race and skin color also shaped those expectations. In perhaps one of the most notable public responses, sports commentator Brent Musburger offered a scathing review of Smith and Carlos in his essay for the *Chicago American* newspaper. Musburger was then a sports-writer working to build a career when he wrote a column on the event that both recalled the generations-long discourse concerning black bodies and the contemporaneous challenges of a culture struggling to face its ongoing racial injustice. One of the most notable attempts to demean Smith and Carlos is Musburger's description of them as "black-skinned stormtroopers." The most significant element of this phrase to consider is the way in which it highlights the blackness of the men's bodies. Beginning with a reference to their skin, Musburger's comments remind us that the embodied act was significant because of the bodies performing. Simultaneously, the reference aligning those bodies with the malevolent image of invading German soldiers from WWI and WWII lands with a particular punch given the fact that the protest occurred in the context of an international athletic event designed to bring countries together across difference and politics to compete on an even playing field. Musburger's reference constructs these protesting bodies as interrupting that context.

Indeed, Smith and Carlos likely did intend interruption, given their desire to gain attention for their cause. Reynolds and other feminist scholars note that interruption often serves as an effective means of engaging a powerful group or institution in the concerns of a silenced minority, offering visibility to a group and to a set of issues that Smith and Carlos, at least, believed were largely invisible. Musburger, of course, did not value this kind of disruption, given that his essay goes on to reference Smith and Carlos as "unimaginative" and "juvenile." This opinion, by a public figure who would go on to have a long and successful (and, I must note, ongoing) career as a sports journalist, offers a glimpse into the response that Smith and Carlos experienced in the days and weeks following their performance. Significantly, Musburger's response to the raising of fists in quiet protest reflected the depth to which the discourse and expectations for black bodies was woven into the institutions not only of Olympic Sports, but also of public sports media.[15]

Smith and Carlos, then, in raising their fists, pushed back against a dominant discourse that constructed black men as dangerous. Though the rhetoric of their physical stance and behavior performed humility, calm, and solidarity, the prevailing narrative about black male bodies was reflected in institutional responses that framed them as transgressive, rude, and potentially dangerous. The raised fist, most easily associated with aggression, is coupled with a stance of humility, bowed heads, stillness. This gesture, then, creates a sense of confidence and engagement, just what is expected of a citizen. However, in the United States, a long history of keeping black individuals from political agency via the vote highlights the way that blackness and citizenship have been disconnected. Perhaps the most significant challenge that black bodies raising fists provides to a democratic state is the defiance of the narrow understanding of citizenship as white citizenship. Certainly, the notion of protest and speaking is baked into the U.S. recipe for civic identity. However, the idea of citizenship was created at a time when black bodies were legally not considered humans, let alone citizens. Consequently, when black bodies perform protest, their very existence is a challenge to the normative white citizenship that underlies U.S. democratic institutions.

[15] Though Musburger has been pressured to apologize for his comments regarding Smith and Carlos, he has never done so. Additionally, he seems to have maintained his discomfort with this kind of protest. In a 2016 interview in which he was asked about kneeling during the national anthem at professional sports events, Musburger asserted that players who knelt were “embarrassing [their] country’s song” and that ultimately “symbolism along” didn’t do much” (“Why Brent Musburger….”).

Particularly when the enactment of voice is coupled with an embodied act like the raising of a fist, an act which claims the power of the black body, that act and those bodies can be read as threats to rather than as enactments of citizenship. Hesse reminds us that the history of the U.S. and its democratic institutions suggests that "[t]hrough the performative institution of civil society, the originary white citizens has subsequently created black citizens, which meant in the performativity of the democratic nation, thee citizenship of black citizens was subsequently owned by its white citizens" (590). While Hesse sees this condition as the basis of the racialized policing of black bodies by police forces, I argue that this condition extends into the public imaginary as a lens through which to see black bodies performing protest. Citizenship, as it was originally conceived in the U.S., simply did not include black bodies. Amy Brandzel argues that "[c]itizenship is an external and internal system of sorting and distributing rights, resources, and most importantly, values to various types of bodies" (10). So, when black bodies perform a fundamental right of citizen, the act of protest, then the shocked response of a public belies the belief of that public that those performers be excluded from the category of citizen or political agents.

In performing this relatively brief and small rhetorical act, Smith and Carlos relied on a longstanding rhetorical tradition in the African-American church, creating a sort of embodied call and response. Knowing that the world's attention was on them, they called out by raising their fists and lowering their gaze, and in doing so, they primed a set of responses from both supporters and critics that had significant repercussions. Of course, as I said previously, though the immediate response to the raised fists on the medal stand was critical and called for punishment, the act itself took hold as an enduring symbol of resistance and Black Power. In considering how this act comes to be associated with successful protest, and the act with that of brave and determined men and not discourteous athletes, I turn to a consideration of the call and response associated with the raising of the fist, in both the recirculation of the embodied act and the way the raised fist begins to function as rhetorical synecdoche. I also consider the way public response to the gesture and the symbol shifts as it gains distance from the black bodies who performed it in October 1968.

The Fist Materialized, Circulated, and Reenacted

That this ephemeral action was performed on a global stage transmitted by video and photography offered an immediate means of circulation and an immediate demand for response. While the commentary of the sports world came as one response, other rhetorical responses ensued. Following the 1968 Olympic Games, the image of the medal stand protest was reproduced innumerable times in the next few months. Some version of the podium image can be found in news reports of the time from Mexico City, to newspapers in every major U.S. city, to other news outlets reporting on the Olympics. Likely due to a combination of the large global audience for the Olympic Games, the unusual event of a protest during the medal ceremony, and the volatile nature of political life in 1968, year-end retrospectives and later retellings of events of the year continued to offer the image of the two men, fists raised and heads bowed, for repeated discussion and response, still largely focused on the disruption and problem created by the event.

As the immediate memory of the Olympic protest faded with time, however, the embodied act of raising a fist persisted, as did the reproduction of material objects with the fist icon, associated with a range of bodies and ideologies. With this repetition came a series of rhetorical effects. First, the act became more firmly associated with Black Power and racial justice movements. While the world was watching these two athletes raise their fists in protest in an action that came to be known as the Black Power Salute, other black citizens and political activists were enacting similar stances in public. Through the end of the 1960s and the 1970s, the act of raising a fist, when performed by a variety of bodies, including black men, women, and even children, came to be seen as an activist act. When Bobby Seale was on trial with the "Chicago 9," a courtroom drawing shows him raising his fist, with the gesture returned by those in the courtroom. Photography of the time shows activists in a variety of locations raising their fists. The gesture, in fact, became a common act in public by leaders of the Black Power Movement, indicating power, collectivity, and resistance to the norm of white supremacy and black political disenfranchisement.

Perhaps most widely recognized instances of the fist gesture beyond the Olympic event were the actions of well-known political activists Muhammed Ali, Malcolm X, and members of the Black Panther Party. One of the most likely reasons that the fist created such a dramatic response at the Olympics stems from the fact that what had previously been seen as an act limited to the extremes of activists, easily avoided by the average American, while the Olympics was a family event, enjoyed by people who may wish to remain disengaged from conversations surrounding race and justice. As other people, most often black men, continued to reenact that gesture, raising their fists as part of political action and speech, the response was often similarly critical. The gesture, then, continues its call and response, with the responses being divided: supporters of the cause respond with the echo of the gesture while others respond with critique. In this way, perhaps predictably, the purveyors of the master narratives about the narrow acceptable actions for black bodies continued to respond with suspicion and criticism at black bodies raising fists to indicate both individual and collective power. Here, I aim to complicate Corbett's assertion that a "closed fist just prompts another closed fist to be raised" (Corbett 295). While Corbett's assessment offers a metaphor by which we may see the response of the power structures of the Olympic organization and the media as they offer criticism and rebuke, I also suggest that the responsive embodied raised fist, offered by supporters, seeks collective identification. Rather than simply encouraging a violent or angry response, the raised fist of solidarity offers a means of enacting support and an association with a marginalized group and their concerns.

The responses to this gesture shifted further as bodies other than those of black men began performing the act. Notably, three years after the performance of Smith and Carlos, another pair of bodies raised fists together in a public forum and garnered different reactions. Well-known justice activists Gloria Steinem and Dorothy Pitman Hughes, co-founders of *Ms*. Magazine, posed for a studio photograph wearing coordinated neutral tops, raising fists, and staring deliberately at the camera. The photograph, taken by Dan Wynn, appeared in *Esquire* magazine in October of 1971.

Figure 10. Gloria Steinem and Dorothy Pitman Hughes from *Esquire*, 1971.

While this image obviously hearkens back to the Olympic podium just a few years earlier and is paired with an article critical of Steinem's activist work, the photo's framing and rhetorical effect is significantly different. Alongside an article largely focused on calling attention to Steinem's work in support of rights movements, the photo is offered as a kind of fashionable accompaniment, complementing the article. In a magazine like *Esquire*, in which fashion and pop culture coexist with a framework that defines American masculinity, the photograph of two women raising fists performs a different rhetorical function than the Smith and Carlos moment three years prior. While the performative stance between the Olympic moment and the *Esquire* photo are similar, the difference in response and ultimately in rhetorical effect can be traced to the bodies "speaking" and the discourses in which those bodies exist.

The expectations of women's bodies in the early 1970s, in the midst of second wave feminism, along with the expectations of the specific women in the photo certainly shaped the public response. By 1970, Steinem was already clearly associated with the activist movements, particularly with protests against the Vietnam War, racial justice movements, and work to revisit the national discussion about the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment as part of a growing Women's Rights Movement. Hughes was, at the time, an activist focused on child care issues and other related women's concerns. At the opening of the decade, Steinem and Hughes had teamed up for a speaking tour to call attention to women's issues. Their collaboration at the time of this photo was publicly known as they had worked together to co-found *Ms. Magazine*, a publication that became central to second-wave feminism in the 70s and 80s. Notably, both women displayed significant savvy about the context in which they were engaging in activist work, and had taken a number of notes from other movements, including the Black Power movement. Their history of connecting with activists from other movements suggests a possible reason for the stance in the photograph and potentially for the cynical tone of the article in its focus on Steinem's career to that point. In fact, the retrospective article in *Esquire* in October 1971 takes a largely critical view of Steinem and her work, calling her "good at manipulating the very rich and the very famous" (Levitt 87) and reviewing rather harshly the various means by which she had worked on issues related to women's rights and racial justice, including a description of her writing as "pedestrian" (Levitt 202). The framing of her work, then, follows closely the dominant discourse about women as manipulative, uninspired, and generally harmless, if annoying. Perhaps predictably, while Hughes was similarly active in the Women's Rights Movement, co-founding *Ms. Magazine* with Steinem, her story was less frequently centered in the national media, and in the *Esquire* story she is simply mentioned with the descriptor “women’s-rights crusader.”

While parsing the motivation for this emphasis requires conjecture, the fact that Steinem became the most well-known feminist of the era reminds us that white perspectives are often centered, even in diverse social movements with aims relevant to many racial identities. The framing of Steinem’s work seems to mirror that of Smith and Carlos, in that both groups are offered by mainstream reporting as reflective of the dominant discourse that applies to their identities as white women or as black men. Similarly, the relative silencing of Hughes’ work, sidelining her in the media, mimics the double-marginalization of black women in both political and public spheres.

However, the response to the image generally lacks the vitriol and suspicion associated with the responses to Smith and Carlos. First, these women’s gesture, specifically the framing of the image of the raised fists, is significantly different that the description of the same act by two black men. As I discussed earlier, the act of raising a fist by two black men was met with immediate harshness, highlighting the transgression of the two black men. The presentation and description of the photo in *Esquire*, on the other hand, suggests much less concern. The photo, staged and lighted to achieve a particular kind of seriousness, takes a full page in the magazine, serving as the second page in the article. Its framing, then, serves to reinforce rather than disrupt its context, as Smith and Carlos had. The black and white of the photo and the direct gaze of the women suggest earnestness of purpose and a commitment to their cause. Similarly, the positioning and sizing of the photo seems to hold the image up for viewing, suggesting a desire for readers to take a good look. The photograph, taken on its own in the presentation offered, suggests that the raised fist has attained some kind of acceptance in the broader culture, perhaps as a result of the gender of the bodies performing. The caption of the photo in the magazine reads: “Body and Soul. Gloria Steinem and her partner, Dorothy Pitman Hughes, demonstrate the style that has thrilled audiences on the Women’s Liberation lecture circuit” (Levitt 89). Given that the caption highlights the “thrilled audiences” rather than using descriptors such as “bizarre” or “discourteous,” and that the caption ignores the raised fists tells us that the bodies performing that act matter. While Smith and Carlos, as black men, had been read as threatening and discourteous, Steinem and Hughes are seen as somehow fashionable, thrilling audiences. Though the dress and somber expressions on the women’s faces suggest an attempt to disrupt the context of a men’s magazine in which women may still be seen as secondary accompaniments to men, the caption reinforces the context in which the photo appears: the women offer style and a thrill, with no attention paid to the act or the active solidarity and political resistance that act suggests. As the gesture moves away from black male bodies, its level of acceptance in a broader culture grows.

The Fist as Icon

In addition to the shift in public responses as a broader set of bodies performed the raised fist gesture in public settings, a wider acceptance for the gesture appears to take place alongside the creation of material goods. In addition to embodied reenactments of this gesture, the fist symbol or icon began to find purchase in material culture, from buttons and pins indicating protest to wearables and other everyday objects distant from political conversations about race, justice, or other ideological concerns. Movement buttons, jackets, hats, and other objects all leveraged the fist as a symbol of unity, of collectivity. These material objects engendered broader responses.

Some of these items were clearly related to the political and social aims of the Black Power movement or other elements of the Civil Rights Movement. Numerous institutional (and likely many personal) collections of memorabilia from this time period include items with the fist icon. For instance, the National Museum for African American History and Culture holds many fist items, with a variety of apparent purposes.

Figure 11. Black Power Buttons

The buttons in figure 11, calling attention both to the Black Power Movement and to the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), show the power of the symbol, as the raised fist, printed in black in both cases, is central to the image. Wearing such a button, while not disruptive in the way that the embodied gesture is, offers the clear possibility of identification with a political or social movement and its members and disidentification with white supremacy and its institutions in the U.S. In this way, the buttons offer the rhetorical effect of collectivity (in a visual call and response) without the embodied gesture that can be seen as aggressive or even “discourteous.”

Similarly, items not traditionally related to political movements at all began carrying the symbol. In a particularly savvy way, these items become further leverage in ongoing political conversations. An afro comb held by the NMAAHC offers an example.

Figure 12. Afro Comb with Fist Design

This comb, including the fist but no linguistic markers, offers a visual identification with the Black Power movement with no words needed. That the object itself is tightly associated with black lives, as a tool for black hair, allows the fist to perform its rhetorical function in the absence of language. Additionally, that the fist appears here on an object generally seen as apolitical suggests the broadening rhetorical acceptance of the symbol.

Taking a note from the Black Panthers and Black Power movement, other movements and groups used the symbol on a number of other items, both with reference to Black Power and without. When the raised fist started to show up on everyday material objects, the message of collectivity was highlighted, both as related to race and as separate from race. One example is a black jacket from the Vietnam Era.

Figure 13. Vietnam Tour Jacket

The use of the fist on this jacket clearly identifies the wearer with Black Power, but it highlights the idea of "Black Unity" in larger print. In this way, the symbol is being directly tied to the idea of collectivity, enacting the work of synecdoche in calling to mind the whole of a movement. The fist becomes emblematic, not only of a singular body enacting a gesture, but also of the collective body of a movement for justice.

I contend that the growing prevalence and ultimately acceptance of this symbol can be attributed to the ways this material culture engages a wider range of bodies and, at least in some cases, a range of ideological issues beyond race. Given that the creation of a variety of material goods displaying the disembodied icon of a fist offered a new way to identify with a justice movement, a signal that spoke no matter the body, no matter the action of that body, the fist itself becomes more acceptable. The propagation of the image of two black men with raised fists in popular media, along with both sports and political discussions of 1968 offered a means by which this symbol could pick up velocity as an icon of Black Power and racial justice toward the end of the 1960s and into subsequent decades.

In all of these instances, the embodied act of raising a fist may have continued to be seen as transgressive and resistant, part of a youthful counterculture that relies on material culture for identification purposes. The wide use of the fist icon, though, clearly indicates a growing acceptance of the gesture and the symbol growing from the gesture. While the protest of Smith and Carlos has been recast as an important and brave activity in recent years, which I will discuss later, the reproducing of the fist or the action of raising a fist often garners the same response in the later 1960s and 1970s that their action did in the moment of the Olympics—anger, fear, judgment.

The recurring reenactment of the act of raising a fist in the years following the ’68 Games, along with the reproduction of the disembodied fist on objects both political and mundane, serve to reinforce the rhetorical effect of the fist. The owner of the fist, whether embodied or not, is often immediately identified with racial justice. As the bodies raising or wearing fists become more varied, finding distance from the black male bodies so long marginalized, the rhetorical effect of the fist is extended and perhaps attenuated. While Smith and Carlos experience hatred and aggression for raising a fist, Steinem and Hughes are held up as passionate and committed (though, as feminist activists they faced similar disparagement, that derision was not based on the stance). Perhaps it is the ongoing circulation and reenactment that allows the memory of the Olympic Protest to be transformed, from a disruptive, discourteous protest, to an act of bravery and political heroism, deserving praise and commemoration—a journey 50 years in the making.

The Fist and Memory

Finally, after many years of these effects, with bodies raising fists and wearing fists, the story of Smith and Carlos has come to be associated with justice itself, thinning the criticism of the two athletes while allowing the fist to serve as a synecdoche of racial justice. With greater distance from the event, and particularly as we approached the 2018 50th anniversary of the protest, the icon of the raised fist broadens in association, while memorials to Smith and Carlos frame the men as brave justice advocates, calling the world's attention to suffering without concern for the negative repercussions they both experienced. The ways in which this act and the iconic symbol associated with the act have been circulated and reenacted has provided a means to durability for what was an ephemeral moment lasting only a few minutes. While many similar ephemeral acts of protest over the generations have been lost, this one, performed as it was for a global audience and speaking at is did to a longstanding discourse of white supremacy, has gained a place in the national memory of the United States. As the story of Smith and

Carlos has continued to be retold and ultimately memorialized, the cultural attitude toward these men and their action has shifted. In most instances of memorialization of the protest, the singular focus highlights the embodied performance and the emblematic image of a raised fist that followed. Over the course of decades after the podium protest by Smith and Carlos, this moment has become iconic, celebrated by people in the United States and elsewhere.

In recent years, the story of the 1968 Olympic Protest has been held up as one of the most recognizable and praiseworthy examples of protest in the country's history. Nearly every mainline news organization, along with myriad popular magazines, and varied non-profit organizations like the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress, has memorialized these two men and their raised fists in retrospectives ranging from yearly stories, to documentaries, to exhibits and special coverage.[16] The distance between the ostracizing and death threats they experienced in 1968 to the iconic standing of the 2018 50th anniversary commemorations is vast. Yet, not just the story of Smith and Carlos and their situated concerns for justice, but the act itself, in the form of varied reproductions of the raised fist, has been memorialized. In 2013, artist Glenn Kaino met Tommie Smith

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[16] A cursory survey of stories related to Smith and Carlos yields an extraordinary number of results. In particular, the 40th, 45th, and 50th anniversaries of the event brought a surge in retrospective and memorializing stories running the gamut of publications, including journalistic, academic, and popular outlets. In addition to articles from virtually every national news organization, numerous documentary films, including *Fists of Freedom* (1999) and *Salute* (2008) have retold the story of Smith and Carlos, to varying degrees of detail.

and started collaborating to create the exhibit that would ultimately commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 1968 event. A 2018 show at the High Museum in Atlanta, Georgia titled "With Drawn Arms" included myriad artifacts, including drawings, sculptures, material objects from Smith, and a documentary film ("High Museum"). The sculpture "Bridge," a collaborative project of Kaino and Smith, offers a reminder of the rhetorical power of the embodied protest, as it focuses on the arm and the fist of Smith. Spanning 100 feet, the suspended sculpture is made up of fiberglass casts of Smith's arm, painted gold and suspended in a wave in the air. Intended to suggest "a path connected to the past that leads forward from the present," the sculpture repeats the image ("High Museum") of the fist, forming a wave.

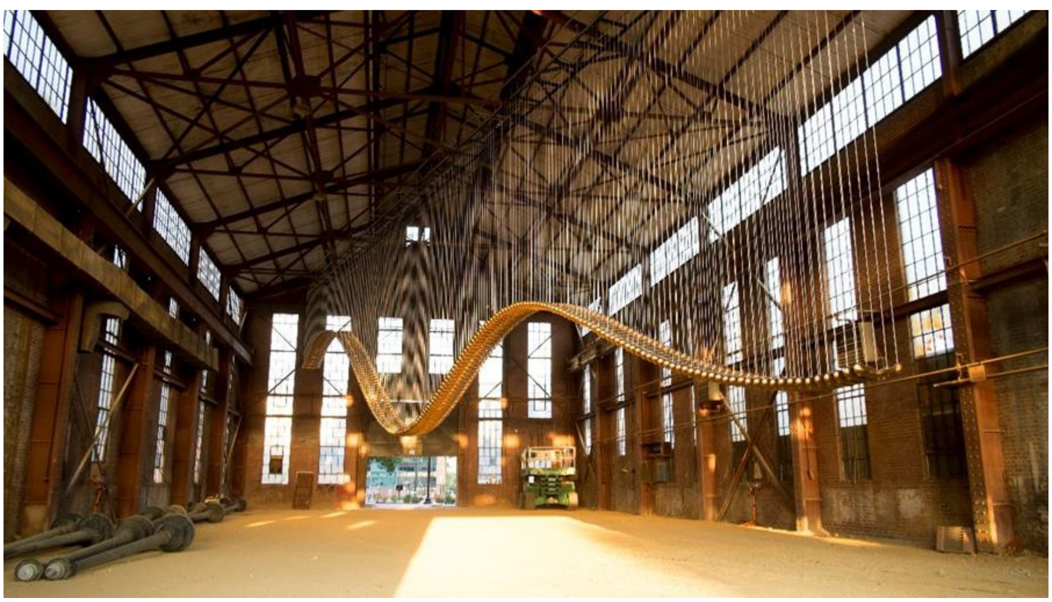

Figure 14. Image of *Bridge* (2014) by Glen Kaino. From the High Museum, Atlanta, GA

This arrangement suggests the rhetorical power of circulation of the image of Smith's fist. Focusing on the man's arm, isolated from the body and the context, both reflects and reinforces the rhetorical power of the embodied image. We are to see the body, both in its collective sense and in an aesthetic sense as it is arranged to highlight movement. We are to see the movement for justice that the arm represents. In the collaborative work of artist and activist, we gain a visual reinforcement of the rhetorical effect of reproduction, whereby both the individual arm and the multiplicities of arms (and bodies) is recalled. The aesthetic of shiny gold also suggests a more positive connotation of achievement.

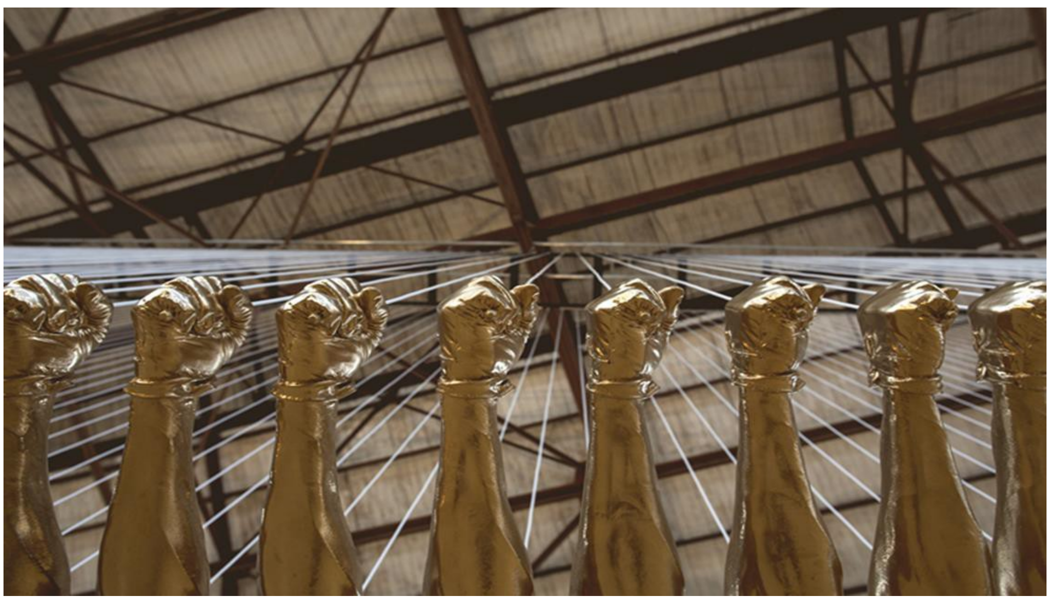

Figure 15. Detail from *Bridge*, by Glen Kaino. From High Museum, Atlanta, GA

The sculpture indicates that gold medal moment and the gesture have become an accepted and celebrated event rather than a moment of challenge and "discourtesy."

Of course, the High Museum is not the only institution that has installed this exhibit or memorialized the event and the activists with other exhibits. Similarly, the National Museum of African-American History and Culture in Washington, DC, a significant development in the centering of African-American experience in the history of this country, includes life-sized statue of the three men with numerous material objects associated with that moment. To access this exhibit, one must move through a section of the space labeled “Making a Way Out of No Way,” which is focused on the history of activism that grew in an African-American community fully cognizant of both the constraining institutional forces and the possibilities that existed within the community. In this section of the museum, curators have gathered notable artifacts from years of athletic achievement by black people, filling cases with medals, photographs, buttons, and other paraphernalia. As part of the exhibit bringing together sports and activism at the museum, this sculpture is hard to miss, situated on the a small podium, allowing visitors to peer up into the faces of the men as they bow their heads. (see figure 16).

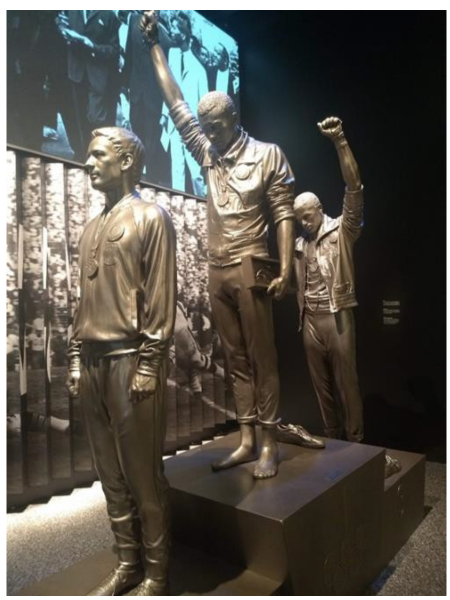

Figure 16. Photograph by Author of NMAAHC Olympic Exhibit, June 2019.

The casting of the bodies as life-sized and realistic replications, including the podium and all of the accessories, emphasizes their physicality and the importance of the bodies in the act. The central location of the exhibit, as part of a larger exhibition on sports and activism in the U.S. reminds us of the enduring nature of the act and the importance of this event in the national imaginary. As the country has made progress toward the inclusion of black bodies in a model of citizenship and democracy that, while still flawed, improves upon the conditions of 1968, the Olympic protest is no longer seen as an embarrassment. The nearby text under the heading "The Revolt of the Black Athlete," situates this specific act in the context of the wider call for a boycott of the '68 Games, reminding us that though popular memory of the act is distinct, it was part of a wide-ranging movement, one that is now highlighted as a positive part of our recent history. This, again, reinforces the rhetorical power of the embodied act to become a regularly memorialized event when other athletes, similarly moved in the moment, have been comparatively forgotten. In addition to the exhibit focused on the Olympic protest, other areas of the museum, particularly the large section on activism toward the end of the permanent collection, include myriad examples of fist ephemera, from flyers, to buttons, to bumper stickers. The gathering of such ephemera speaks both to the durable nature of the symbol and the historical situatedness of the action.

While many institutions and organizations have memorialized the protest event since 1968, perhaps none highlights the power of the circulation of image and reenactment of performance more than recent events. On November 1, 2019, Smith and Carlos were inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame. Acknowledging the ways they were ostracized in the moment by the very organization now honoring them, Tommie Smith highlights the long rhetorical history of this act, stating that "[i]t takes work for things to happen. It takes time. But usually, not 51 years. But I'll take it now and accept it for the young man back in 1968" (qtd. in Koen). Smith highlights the rhetorical nature of the act in his statement. In this way, the act can be seen as a long, generational call and response. While the United States continues to be plagued with racial strife, perhaps most clearly evidenced by development of the Black Lives Matter movement to counter police violence against black bodies, many activists and scholars continue to see the actions of Smith and Carlos echoed in contemporary moments. The rhetorical effect of the act, the reenactments, the materiality, and the memorialization can be seen in the decision to hold the men and their protest up as models of Olympic athletes. While these men asked a public to acknowledge the struggles of black bodies, even as that public praised the performance of their black bodies, they offered a means of rhetorically building community, a call seeking response. And while the responses came in the late 60s and 70s, they continue as we close out the second decade of the 21st century. In fact, while the mediated memory of a protest act has created a communal sense of respect and understanding for Smith and Carlos and their 1968 act of defiance, Colin Kaepernick remains sidelined from the profession in which he was excelling for similarly using his body to challenge the expectation for black male bodies on the athletic field. His act of kneeling during the National Anthem can be seen as performing more humility and sorrow than the raised fist of Smith and Carlos, and yet the same culture that continues to raise up and praise the act of resistance from 50 years ago, continues to ostracize the contemporary version of embodied resistance, often using the same descriptions of disrespectful and disruptive. The contradiction raises questions about whether public discourses about black bodies have really changed all that much from the moment when the two runners were sent home, stripped of their athletic achievement, for daring to perform their raised consciousness of blackness ahead of their athletic superiority.

Conclusion

In August 1968, Smith and Carlos raised their fists in a performative, embodied moment, an act inextricably tied to the bodies performing it. The rhetorical effect of their enactment was immediate and long-lasting, as is evidenced first by the remarkable recirculation of the image of the two black athletes. This embodied, ephemeral moment found purchase in the cultural imaginary via the international stage used by Smith and Carlos and, I argue, as a result of the resistance to normative discourse about the black bodies performing in that moment. Because this moment afforded these men the opportunity to have their message amplified, the raising of the fist gained meaning beyond that moment. Indeed, the immediate and quickly following commentary on the moment, both by those inside the world of sports and those beyond it, gave this ephemeral moment a kind of durability by the recirculation of the image and the discussion over the course, literally, of decades. In the process, of course, we see how the symbol of the fist was also separated from the black body to which it belonged. While re-enactments of the raised fist in the few months following the 1968 Olympic Games remained largely connected to Black Power, the eventual disembodiment provided opportunity for continued amplification and recirculation.

We may see the raised fist of the black power movement as a symbol that rejects complacency and creates a more active movement, embracing the power of a people, both on the individual level and the collective. In this way, the fist as a synecdoche does significant rhetorical work to signal coalition and collaboration, even when active bodies themselves are not present. The downside to the recirculation and the rhetorical synecdoche shows up as it allows the symbol to be disconnected, not only from the body to which it may belong, but ultimately from any movement for social change with which it might be associated. Once the fist becomes a symbol on its own, standing in for the marginalized and precarious bodies of which it is a part, the icon can then be referred to and used in myriad ways. These uses may reflect the values and political aims of performing a raised fist as a symbol of justice, but it is as likely that the disembodied fist can be used in ways that dilute, ignore, or fundamentally contradict the intentions of a movement for racial justice. Activists and scholars then must contend with the question of whether the association of the raised fist with a variety of bodies and social concerns may undermine the focus on issues of justice related specifically to race which Smith and Carlos sought to highlight.

In particular, when actors from varied political and social positions use the embodied action of raising a fist as a means of suggesting solidarity or strength, the rhetorical effect of the fist as a protest image is complicated. For instance, at the end of January 2017, following the divisive and fiery inauguration speech of President Donald Trump, *Time Magazine* published an image of him on the cover that echoes the actions of

Smith and Carlos in 1968. Standing behind the Presidential podium, dressed in a dark suit and signature red tie, a stern Trump raises his right arm, fist clenched with elbow bent.

Figure 17. Donald Trump on *Time* Magazine, January 30, 2017

What are we to make of this gesture, given its history of association with marginalized groups and justice movements? That an embodied action rooted in a history of injustice and marginalization may be performed behind a podium that is associated, perhaps more than any other, with power, control, and self-determination by a man who holds arguably one of the most powerful positions in the world is deeply ironic. Considering the focus on "America First" in the speech, I would argue that Trump is using this gesture, knowingly or not, to construct his positions and his administration as outside the normal power structures and to create a sense of precarity around the idea of the United States, "America," in his words. While I don't intend here to provide a complete or lengthy analysis of this speech or his performance of raising his fist, considering the rhetorical power of this action in this context offers more evidence to suggest that the body, the action, and the image itself retains a sense of power, even as the connection to the Olympic Protest may have faded for many in today's social movements.

Beyond the embodied performance by a multiplicity of people in public spaces, the use of the symbol of the fist has found even more distance from this watershed moment in 1968 as it became a new emoji as early as 2010. Given that its earliest existence as an emoji reflected the white skin of the majority of the tech industry, some activists may see this digital development as evidence of the ways in which the emoji ultimately threatens to further attenuate the connection to issues of justice and race. For instance, as the emoji has grown in popularity, a number of "skin" colors have become available for users of these symbols. In this possibility, question of racial identity and the use of the fist emoji, raises questions regarding allyship and appropriation. While a social media post regarding police brutality against people of color may use the fist emoji as a symbol of the power of solidarity, another post may employ the fist emoji to indicate connection to justice movements unrelated to racial identity or perhaps to suggest social camaraderie outside any justice or rights context. However, data seems to suggest that for many, the use of the fist emoji reinforces the rhetorical power and durability of the moment in 1968 and of the raised fist as a call and response for individuals seeking alliance in justice movements. Data scientist Hamdan Azhar, for instance, analyzed almost 60,000 tweets tagged with viral hashtags associated with protests to consider patterns in perspective and emoji use. This study found that in January 2017, the raised fist emoji was associated with numerous protest-related hashtags, ranking in the top three emojis used for four specific movement hashtags, including #NoBanNoWall,

#NotMyPresident, #TheResistance, and #WomensMarch. Azhar concludes that the raised fist emoji "appears to be a signature emoji of progressive protest." Clearly, the rhetorical power of an emoji in social media spaces where groups of likeminded people gather to connect indicates the distributive possibilities for this icon, even as it shifts into the embodied act in material spaces. That Azhar does not trace the skin color associated with this emoji use reminds us that further work in the digital sphere could be done to consider the way embodiment is echoed or ignored in the contemporary digital context. Regardless, though, the widespread and varied use of the emoji speaks to the circulatory triumph of an ephemeral and embodied moment, highlighting its rhetorical power.

Many digital scholars work to consider the specific effects and considerations related to emojis and other digital means of reproducing the fist. Scholars of Sports continue to trace the role of protest in athletic endeavors. Activists and scholars interested in social justice continue to ask questions about the circulation of information and the building of collectivity in service to a common goal. Each of these lines of inquiry resonate with me, particularly in relation to visual rhetoric and its role in social justice. In considering, though, the ways that marginalized people in the United States experience and resist that marginalization, I am most keenly concerned with the effect of this embodied action and convinced of the central importance of the body. The body matters. The raised fists of two accomplished black men functioned in a way unlike previous examples because of a particular combination of body, place, context, and act. The performative nature of this act, intersecting with cultural expectations for black bodies and athletic bodies in the context of the Olympic Games, allowed this rather simple rhetorical gesture to gain a kind of durability uncommon to individual acts. While the physical act itself was rather small, the echo of that act has found its way through decades, through social movements, and through material means of reproduction to ensconce the raised fist in the cultural imaginary as a symbol of active resistance and solidarity, even if it has drifted from the original concern for racial justice intended by Smith and Carlos in 1968.

CHAPTER IV

VISIBILITY AND PRIDE: BODIES ON PARADE

> I thought a gay nation should have a flag too, to proclaim its own idea of power. —Gilbert Baker, *Rainbow Warrior*

> They're allowed to protest just the same as we are, but don't let them draw you into their anger. Answer them by being your fabulous selves. —LA Pride Organizer, Bruce, (from Bruce*, Pride Parades*)

On June 17, 2019, the California State House flew the Pride Flag for the first time in its history. Though for many, California (San Francisco in particular) has long been considered a significant location for the modern Gay Liberation Movement, even this famously progressive state took decades to offer such a visible sign of support for Pride Month, celebrating the lives and love of LGBTQIA individuals. While the 2015 Obergefell v. Hodges case striking down gay marriage bans nationally signaled the success of the gay liberation movement to many, the 2019 memo from the State Department ordering U.S. embassies not to fly the Rainbow Flag[17] suggests that a battle continues. As these legal and policy battles persist, Pride celebrations are energetic and popular events globally these days, with dozens of cities worldwide hosting vibrant and

[17] In the summer of 2019, the Trump State Department told U.S. Embassies globally that they could not fly Pride Flags on "public-facing flagpoles" (Londono). Many embassies chose to fly the flags anyway, at various locations on embassy grounds. At the same time, California Gov. Gavin Newsom chose to fly the Rainbow Flag from the California State House for the first time, joining Colorado and Wisconsin. Newsom said he wanted to "send a clear message that California is welcoming and inclusive to all" (Klar).

joyous parades and other events aiming to make visible the lives and loves of a wide spectrum of gender and sexual identities.

In fact, much of the country and many parts of the world, celebrate Pride yearly, with events planned in dozens of locations, often concentrated during the summer months. Historian Katherine McFarland Bruce suggests that each year "over six million people either march or watch a Pride parade in 116 cities in the U.S., and many more take part in parades" in other parts of the world (5). A simple internet image search of these Pride parades results in a panoply of images, nearly all including the prominent presence of rainbows, from flags and clothes to balloons and tattoos, and a myriad of joyful faces and bodies performing public pride (see figure 18). In fact, for many, the idea of Pride and the attendant parades and gatherings, is inextricably connected to joy and celebration.

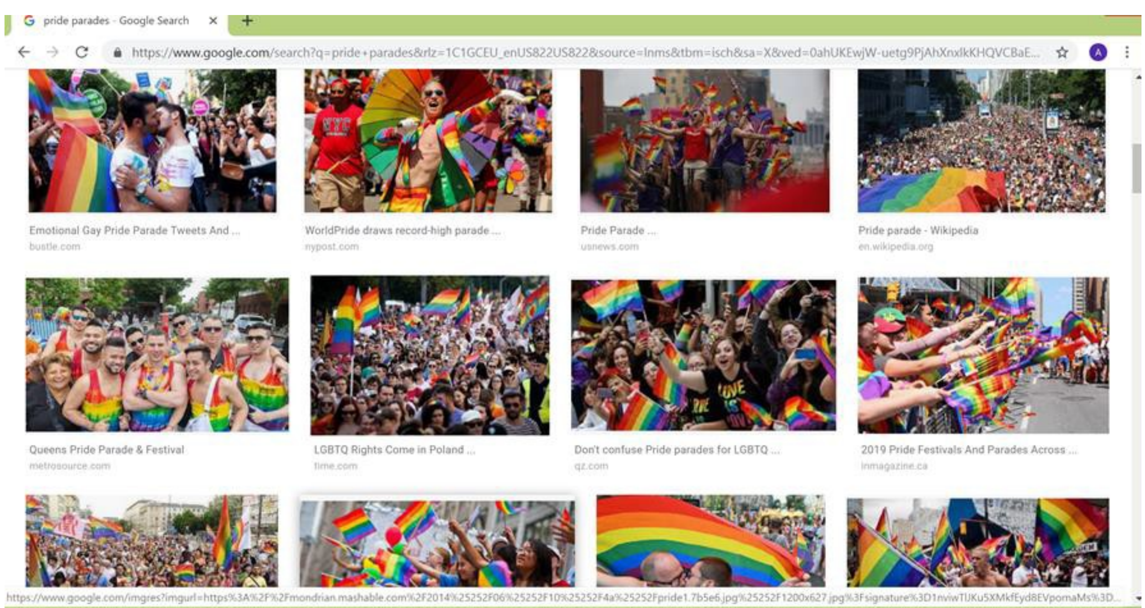

Figure 18. Image Results from a Google Search of "Pride Parades" in 2019.

However, while today's Pride events call to mind celebratory gatherings, scholars of protest and social movements recognize that the path to this moment has been long and complex, with many political, legal, and cultural shifts and plenty of violence, both physical and rhetorical, along the way. In fact, since 1970, when the first Pride events occurred as a part of Christopher Street Liberation Day, a protest and commemoration of the Stonewall Riots of 1969, the movement and the way in which the LGBTQIA community is perceived has grown tremendously. A central rhetorical element in the growth of the movement and the significant cultural shifts instigated by that movement exists in the now ubiquitous rainbow flag.

This chapter aims to consider the development of the rainbow flag and its rhetorical role in the Gay Liberation and Gay Pride movements of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. After considering a variety of historical materials, including archived material, autobiography, and media responses to protest activities, I argue that today, the objects of rainbow flags and ephemeral representations of rainbow flags are doing a lot of the rhetorical work of the movement. In its success as a central symbol, the rainbow flag signals the vibrancy, the joy, the inclusion of a protest movement that had its roots in a movement without symbol, a much smaller, more constrained effort in the 1960s to establish legal rights and protections. Like many marginalized groups seeking legal protections and political reform, gay activists developing a social movement after the Stonewall Riots had cultural work to do first, responding to a long-established underlying doxa of queer bodies being shameful, dangerous, and perverse. Because this cultural work responds to long-held beliefs and deeply-rooted biases, a study of the power of the rainbow flag requires that I trace the distance between 1950s dominant cultural beliefs about homosexuality, the development of homophile organizations that held small protests and provided enclaves of safety for the gay community, and the ubiquity and joy of pride parades today. In historicizing the rhetoric of gay liberation and gay pride, I argue that the object of a rainbow flag has had a significant rhetorical effect on both the LGBTQIA community and the dominant community, paving the way for the global, vibrant events that are now known as Pride, and the visibility now more common in the pop culture and media landscape, and legal rights that have been achieved in the last couple of decades. Specifically, the flag provides a rhetorical response to the cultural doxa related to homosexuality and a reproducible object that serves to support rhetorical identification and visibility for a community long closeted and ostracized. At the same time, the rainbow flag offers the possibility of corporate appropriation of a community and a movement, an appropriation that now helps to create an assemblage that may sometimes work to further marginalize many in the queer community.

In order to properly understand how and why the rainbow flag came to be a symbol tightly associated with Gay Liberation, I aim to establish historical context important to its development. Any consideration, then, of the protest actions of homosexual groups and their supporters in the middle of the 20th century must rely on a careful consideration of the knowledge produced by the contexts in which those actions occurred. In *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick foregrounds the idea that recognizing what knowledge can *do* and not simply *be* offers a productive lens for scholars to engage in historical analysis. In offering a critique of paranoid reading, Sedgwick points to its anticipatory nature as problematic given the possibility of its reproducing expectations and reinforcing hegemonic distinctions. In offering a reparative approach to reading and scholarship, she offers a productive angle for my project. While I do provide a broad historical contextualization of normativity as a setting for my study, I work to consider the myriad ways people and groups sought to engage rhetorical agency, identity, and public discourse in the 20th movement for gay rights, recognizing the limits of this study.

Consequently, in thinking about how to interrogate the historical context of gay rights in the 1950s and 1960s, I recognize that I must consider the power and threats, including both political threats and physical threats that existed in this context. I am influenced in this work by Jean Bessette among others. In "Queer Rhetoric in Situ," Bessette raises questions about methodology in queer rhetorical studies and argues that we must unpack the historical context of queer rhetorical acts in order to interrogate the relational power at play and the ways in which a rhetorical act may perform both queer and normative roles in that historical context. In coming to this argument, Bessette takes on Sedgwick's claim of the tendency toward paranoia in queer theory, considering specifically this tendency and its implications in queer rhetorical studies.

While Bessette's argument for historicizing queer rhetorical scholarship to avoid the pitfalls of paranoid reading offers productive lens through which to consider pride parades and embodied queer protest in the 20th century, she focuses her analysis on the development of queer identity and theory during the AIDS crisis of the late 1980s, thus highlighting Alexander and Rhodes' vison of queer as "synonymous both with antinormativity, anti-assimilationism, and with 'anger, outrage, indignation, and shame' ("Queer Rhetoric")" (Bessette 152). The focus elides queer rhetorical acts prior to the AIDS crisis, limiting queer identity and efficacy in the process. Of course, considering the work of homophile organizations in the mid-century U.S. requires a careful consideration of the role of assimilation and resistance.

Indeed, Bessette rightly raises concerns about the limitations of a view of normativity situated exclusively in sexuality, noting the ways that marginalized groups like punks, who may identify as heterosexual may also "possess the same affect of outsider-anger and outrage directed toward the mainstream attributed to queerness" (Bessette 154). Rather than approach my study assuming any one affective response or attitude in the LGBTQ community pre-Stonewall, I hope to consider the breadth of affective and tactical responses that were enacted in the United States. While the AIDS crisis that Bessette studies created a context in which outrage, anger, and opposition were productive affective stances of the queer community, the historical circumstances of prior decades in the 20th century U.S. offer a more wide-ranging affective experience. My aim, then, is to apply Bessette's notion of establishing a more complete historical context for rhetorical acts, including protest acts, of the 1950s into the early 1970s following the Stonewall riots. Like Bessette, I do not aim to establish a binary between queer and normative, but to interrogate the move within queer movements toward a more unreserved and expansive queer identity, and the rhetorical role of rainbow flags in the development of a Pride movement.

This chapter, then, begins with an examination of the ways in which homosexuality was associated with shame and perversity in the 1950s and 1960s and the contemporaneous responses offered by some in the queer community. Following that historical context, I move to a brief discussion of the Stonewall Riots and the subsequent development of parades as an ongoing protest event. I turn then to the rainbow flag as a significant rhetorical symbol as the movement develops following the events at Stonewall. After discussing the creation of the flag and its rhetorical effects, I look briefly at how the LGBTQ movement has been depicted in the media, both with and without reference to the rainbow flag, and I consider the ongoing circulatory power of rainbow ephemera. As a flexible symbol, the rainbow flag both celebrates a marginal community and offers easy appropriation into commercial enterprises that may or may not advocate for respect and rights for queer people.

Historicizing Cultural Beliefs about Homosexuality

In ways specific to the issue of sexuality and therefore unlike other rights movements, the history of the gay rights movement is diffuse and challenging to trace. Given the significant cultural pressure to be closeted in the early 20th century, a sense of visible community and collectivity was lacking in these decades. A cultural force, homophobia wields significant power to constrain the community. Certainly, queer people living in the 1950s in the United States would not have been able to predict the loud and joyful celebrations of Pride Parades from their perspective of medical, legal, and political alienation and hostility. Indeed, speaking in the 1985 documentary film *Before*

Stonewall, poet Richard Bruce Nugent claims that "homosexuality has always been a dirty word." He goes on to say, "I cannot remember, in my 70-some years, a time when it wasn't a dirty word." The film goes on to discuss the danger of being ostracized or even institutionalized should one's homosexuality be discovered. Though early in the 1920s and 1930s, bohemian neighborhoods in a number of urban centers in the U.S. offered the possibility of openness in speakeasies, private clubs, and homes, this openness was certainly limited, as the dominant culture remained deeply concerned about the "problem" of homosexuality.[18]

This cultural suspicion is laid bare in a 1958 radio program focused on "The Homosexual in Our Society," offered by radio station KPFA in Berkeley, CA, identified as the earliest radio recording that focuses overtly and specifically on homosexuality in the United States by the Digital Public Library of America ("An Excerpt"). Featuring an interview with Hal Call, a gay rights activist and founder of the Mattachine Society, Dr. Blanche Baker, a noted psychologist, and Leah Gailey, the mother of a homosexual man, the program offers a look into the prominent discourses concerning sexuality and homosexuality[19] in the middle of the 20th century. As many historians of the Gay Rights

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[18] The development of enclaved spaces where queer people could socialize and live freely is significant to the history of the Gay Liberation Movement in the late 20th century. While I do not have the space to fully develop this discussion here, numerous sources, both documentary film and print, offer more detail. In particular, Robert Aldrich's *Gay Life and Culture* (2006) and Neil Miller's *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present* offer helpful discussions. The history of Gay Liberation movements can also be traced relative to sexuality and culture. For this background, one would certainly turn to the work of Foucault, Butler, Warner, Sedgewick, Berlant, and Ahmed, among others, to trace the development of contemporary queer theory. In my work to understand the cultural history and development of social movements related to sexuality, I find particular benefit in the work of Johnson (2004), Sears (2006), Cohen (2008), and Bruce (2016).

[19] I aim for an inclusive terminology when discussing marginalized groups. Any discussion of 21st century rhetorics would certainly result in my use of "LGBTQIA" or "queer" in order to attempt to include a

Movement have noted, discourses about homosexuality prior to more radical activism of the late 1960s and the creation of the Christopher Street Liberation Parade of 1970 tended to concentrate on a small number of dominant threads: homosexuality reflected a failing on either medical and psychological grounds, moral grounds, or legal grounds, or often in some various combination of these threads.[20] This radio program demonstrates each of these in turn.

Early on in this broadcast, Dr. Baker makes what must have been a radical statement for the time, asserting that "a homosexual is first of all a human being." The conversation which follows covers a lot of rhetorical ground, including the insightful discussion of Dr. Baker's view that "all human beings have both maleness and femaleness in them" and that "in America…we have too much the attitude that a person is either male or female." Dr. Baker notes that homosexuality is more like a "personality pattern," and she admits that hers is likely a "minority" attitude in her field. She notes that the general attitude toward homosexuality is "hostile," so, these comments clearly set Dr. Baker apart from her professional colleagues in that she was not willing to ascribe a

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spectrum of identities associated with gender and sexuality. In this chapter, my focus on mid- to late-20th century protest rhetorics finds a narrower language associated with the breath of individuals who would identify as part of what we now may refer to more broadly as queer. To be consistent with the work of that time, my discussion of archival materials, be they audio, visual, or textual, will rely on the terms "homosexual" or "gays and lesbians." I recognize the limits of this language and the ways that these terms erase the existence of bisexuals, pansexuals, asexuals, and other sexual identities. I do not intend to further that erasure, but to reflect the ways the individuals and groups whose rhetorics I am considering tended to refer to themselves in those texts and contexts.

[20] The discourses around homosexuality are complex and interwoven. As a significant part of the medical and psychological construction of homosexuality as deviant, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* has changed its understanding of homosexuality, labeling it a mental disorder until 1973, then as related to "sexual orientation disturbance" until 1987, when it was finally removed from the DSM (Burton). Additionally, the teaching of some religious groups that homosexuality is a sin and limitations on legal rights, including marriage, adoption, and labor protections, have served to significantly limit the freedoms of queer people in the United States.

simplistic notion of neurosis or disorder as a broad-brush diagnosis for homosexuality in the way that many of her colleagues apparently did. In fact, the first edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-I)*, published in 1952 and in use at the time of the radio broadcast, indicated that homosexuality was a “sociopathic personality disturbance” (Drescher 434). Given that the next iteration, *DSM-II* published in 1968, would classify homosexuality as a “sexual deviation” and that homosexuality would not be removed from the DSM until 1987, any medical or psychiatric opinion humanizing or normalizing homosexuality as Dr. Baker attempts in this 1958 discussion would be seen as broad-minded indeed.

No matter the comparatively broad-minded nature of this 1958 discussion, including Call’s assertion of homosexuality as a natural occurrence, the discourse in this radio broadcast continues to center on the “problem” of homosexuality. Indeed, homosexuality is discussed as a condition that creates, in the words of the host, “vital problems for the individuals involved and also…it creates a problem for the society.” Throughout this conversation, then, we see the rhetorical positioning of homosexuality as problem, in need of solution. The comments of Leah Gailey indicate the “shock” and “ostracism” she experienced in recognizing the homosexual identity of her son, even though she loved her son and wanted to understand homosexuality. The experience for her, while discussed from the perspective of love and acceptance, is centered on the problem created by her son’s homosexuality. Indeed, even Hal Call, a gay man noted today for his consistent work to create a sustainable and supportive community for homosexual men and women, attempts to assert the presence and normalcy of homosexuality by referring to it as "the problem of homosexuality or the existence of homosexual people." The discourse of *problem* and *deviation* is clear, even in this more open forum, limiting the possibilities for discussion of basic rights or liberation, let alone any exploration of joy or vibrancy in the lives of homosexual individuals that we may see presented by pride parades today.

The focus on homosexuality as a medical or psychological problem constructs homosexual people, then, as in need of medical or psychological intervention in order to live acceptable, "normal" lives. Of course, as is true of any cultural doxa or stereotype, no single strand of rhetorical isolation functions alone. Indeed, the medical label of "ill" or "sick" was not singular in the discourse of homosexuality in the mid-20th century, as legal and governmental forces also worked to ostracize and punish homosexual men and women in broader and arguably more public ways. The decade of the 1950s included the harassment and firing of thousands of federal employees because of the suspicion that they were homosexual. Dubbed "The Lavender Scare" as a counterpart to the more well-known Red Scare pursued by Senator Joseph McCarthy, the action by a group of legislators aimed to publicly out homosexual federal employees.[21] Given the legal and legislative power of Congress, these men had the leeway they needed to conduct hearings to identify and further marginalize homosexuals, leveraging a potential threat to national security to justify the firing and public ostracizing of homosexual federal employees.

[21] For further consideration of these events, David K. Johnson's book-length discussion *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* offers in-depth study of this period, including details of varied cases and hearings.

The mechanisms and personalities associated with the Lavender Scare are numerous. For the purpose of considering the rhetorical nature of homophobia in this period, a close look at Executive Order 10450, issued by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on April 27, 1953, demonstrates a rhetorical construct that identified homosexual men and women as dangerous and threatening. This language ultimately led to the dismissal of thousands of federal employees from various agencies and positions throughout the federal government. In explaining the purpose and role of executive orders and proclamations, a 1957 House Government Operations Committee document states that "Executive orders are generally directed to, and govern actions by, Government officials and agencies. They usually affect private individuals only indirectly" (qtd in Chu and Garvey 1). While this explanation of the role of executive orders is presented after Executive Order 10450, it offers a sense of the accepted purpose and constraints of the genre, given that Congressional and Judicial powers may limit the power of the President in issuing orders related to other governmental and legal business. This constraint of the genre is significant for considering the historical context and import of Executive Order 10450 in the lives of homosexual people in the United States, as this document claims from its beginning to focus narrowly on government employees.

The title of Executive Order 10450, "Security requirements for Government employment," does important rhetorical work. By situating this Executive Order in the discourse of security, the title directly introduces the idea that some employees may introduce threat or danger to the country. This title, then, aligns notions of national security with individual employees in important ways. Beyond the title, the Executive

Order includes 15 sections, and while focusing on individual employment, this executive order never mentions homosexuality. Regardless, the power of this Executive Order for constructing homosexuals as dangerous and a risk for the country ultimately derives from Section 8, in the middle of the document. Section 8 begins: "The investigations conducted pursuant to this order shall be designed to develop information as to whether the employment or retention in employment in the Federal service of the persona being investigated is clearly consistent with the interests of the national security." This section, then, establishes that investigations of whether a given federal employee is deemed a threat to national security may follow and may consider specific kinds of information. Further, the document highlights a single phrase in section 1.iii that creates a rhetorical foundation upon which the continuing cultural belief that homosexuality poses a threat is built: "Such information shall relate, but shall not be limited, to the following:… (iii) Any criminal, infamous, dishonest, immoral, or notoriously disgraceful conduct, habitual use of intoxicants to excess, drug addiction, *sexual perversion*" (Executive Order 10450, emphasis added). This simple phrase, "sexual perversion," is rhetorically significant. First, the fact that "sexual perversion," a general and vague term, is offered alongside the more specific vices of "drug addiction" or "dishonesty," constructs certain kinds of sexual behavior as unacceptable and dangerous. Additionally, the vagueness of "sexual perversion" provided latitude in deciding what kind of behavior might be questioned in legislative investigations.

Public Congressional hearings related to these attitudes, both preceding and following the Executive Order, further reinforced the belief that homosexual people were a problem, not just from a medical perspective, but importantly for reinforcing a cultural homophobia, also from a national security perspective. Media reports of these hearings, noting the thousands of government workers who were fired as a result, reinforced the common association of homosexuality and perversion, and therefore with danger. A 1952 headline from the *New York Times* announces "126 Perverts Discharged," reviewing the State Department's actions in the previous 15 months. In this brief notice, Carlisle H. Humelsine, Deputy Under Secretary for Administration was quoted as testifying that "homosexuals are security risks" and further asserting that "we are going to clean them up" (qtd. in "126 Perverts Discharged"). While this designation of "perverts" appears in numerous places, both governmental and media texts, the association of "perverts" or "homosexual" with security risk or threat to the nation does significant damage to people in the gay community, causing economic, social, and ultimately physical threats. The simultaneous statement about the need to "clean them up" does significant work toward constructing homosexuality as a threat.

Even when the slur of "pervert" is absent, the association continues, as in the 1953 *New York Times* article reporting on the "ouster" of federal employees following the Executive Order. In this article, the targeted attacks are discussed in a sanitized way, reporting that the "White House announced on Oct. 23 that 1,456 government employes [sic] had been separated from the Federal payroll since May 27 under President Eisenhower's Executive Order" ("384 Ousters Listed in State Department"). While avoiding the use of "perverts," the article goes on to normalize the association of homosexuality with threat by reporting that "[t]he Eisenhower program calls for the dismissal of any employe [sic] who might ‘act contrary to the best interests of national security’” and that this action was specifically “aimed at homosexuals, alcoholics and ‘blabbermouths,’ as well as Communists and Red sympathizers” (“384 Ousters”). In a 1950s context, this list of outsiders reminds national readers that homosexuality is among the most dangerous identities present in the country, not only in individual terms, but also in larger, national, even geo-political terms. While governmental, legal, and medical discourses of the 1950s reinforced the long held national notions of homosexuality as a threat, publicly associating queerness with an existential threat to the country as a whole, there was not, as yet, a unified movement to assert rights. While we may, at this time, see an occasional resistant actor working to resist these powerful institutional forces, there was not yet any unified movement or organization working on behalf of queer citizens, no real leaders stepping up to encourage activism or provide leadership, and certainly no symbol or image to speak back against these normative discourses.

Homophile Organizations and Activism

While not focused on serving as agents of social change at their founding in the 1950s, homophile organizations like the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis offered gay and lesbian people the possibility of enclave, safe association, and recognition. Measures such as Executive Order 10450 and the ensuing Lavender Scare worked to excise gay men and lesbians from public workforces and erase their presence in communities, but they ironically gave greater visibility to the population of gays and lesbians that had previously been largely invisible, even to one another. Homophile organizations, functioning primarily as a way to associate and share information across the country, provided a growing sense of collectivity. The handful of resistant activities planned by these groups would not take the joyful, vibrant form of contemporary pride parades, often supporting an assimilationist approach to protest in the 1950s and 1960s, but they ultimately provided the connectivity that the embodied acts of the Pride Movement in the second half of the 20th century were founded on.[22] Referencing this growing collectivity, in the 1958 radio interview, Hall Call mentions the attempts to form community that were happening across the country with a membership of 117 individuals looking to form associations with other homosexuals for the purpose of responding to the problems facing homosexuals in the country. The Mattachine Society grew to be a larger, more active organization later in the decade through the 1960s, but the origins during the 1950s, with the medical, psychological, and legal constructions of homosexuals as problems and dangers to the society, demonstrate the need for identification and association that exist in marginalized communities.

Scholars of social movements, of course, have long understood this need to cultivate identification within groups seeking social change. In the case of the Pre-Stonewall movement for Gay Liberation and Gay Rights, both the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Billitis began as a means of connecting people who were largely hidden, invisible, with one another. While the organizations themselves offered a membership, providing a specific connection, they did not initially offer a clear plan for

[22] Small protests were planned during this time, particularly in response to the discriminatory labor practices associated with the Lavender Scare. Like the protest at the White House in 1965, these protests often included men and women in conservative dress, aiming to avoid any association with anything that might be deemed perverse. In this way, the homophile groups recognize the power of the dominant narrative of perversity and aim to avoid any behavior that might reinforce this dangerous narrative.

resistance or a sense of a larger movement. Within these organizations, the primary discursive orientation was toward safety and community. Public spaces were not safe spaces. In fact, as the federal government worked to construct homosexual individuals as dangerous to the nation, the result was an increase in danger for those individuals, in the form of loss of economic security, loss of privacy, and the potential for shame and ostracizing in the social context in which they lived. Consequently, the remote, yet safe, spaces of these homophile organizations offered a sense of burgeoning collectivity, if primarily focused on creating identification rather than political or protest action. These organizations, then, were early manifestations of what would become a movement, though they were not using tactics and strategies of social movement groups at this time.

Instead, one of the most consistent elements of homophile organizations were the newsletters mailed to members to communicate organizational work, national or regional information of interest, and event announcements, functioning to create a kind of queer media that echoed the norms of the broader community inside the enclaved community. As an example, a December, 1953 *San Francisco Mattachine Newsletter* offers details about the development of organizational structure and guidelines. Reporting that in November of that year, the organization had held its first convention at the First Universalist Church in Los Angeles, this newsletter offers details of the discussions there, including negotiation of wording in a Constitution for the organization. In particular, the newsletter indicates that the preamble was being changed, deleting the phrase "highly ethical homosexual culture" to avoid suggesting that the group was aiming to create a "special 'culture'" (*San Francisco Mattachine Newsletter* 1). Additionally, the newsletter indicates that some members objected to the use of the word “homosexual” in the preamble “because the Society is not an organization of homosexuals, but rather a group interested in the problems of the homosexual and the sex variant” (1).[23] This focus on developing documents and guidelines that mimic citizenship in the U.S. context argues that one aim of the Mattachine society was to develop a policy structure to create clarity, inclusion, and security to its members. In this way, Mattachine was not anti-normative or resistant, but was simply eager to provide a measure of identification and security to its members. Additionally, this discussion indicates both the focus on creating a safe enclave and the openness to a diverse group that both identified as “homosexual” as well as what we may now refer to as “allies.”

While working to create a structure that paralleled the normative governmental structure, this example from the newsletters reflected the group’s support and communal relationship and also served to reinforce dominant perspectives, with the continued use of the term “variant.” In a July 15, 1954 edition of the newsletter, members were offered instructions about carrying identification and other directives about embracing expectations of the dominant culture. In the April 1954 newsletter, the major headline reports incorporation of the society and the formation of new chapters in more cities, and details of the planning of the first Society Convention are offered. On the third page of that newsletter, though, we see further evidence of the assimilationist tendency of the

[23] Many archives, including digital archives, hold collections of newsletters from the Mattachine Society, including various branches. The newsletter quoted here is accessible digitally through the Digital Collection at the University of California, Berkeley, which holds 77 newsletters from the San Francisco Mattachine Society, dating from 1953 to 1961.

group, following a headline that reads "Avoiding Sensational Publicity Has Been a Society Aim." The discussion there clearly references tension between Society leaders and writers from *One* Magazine, a prominent publication of the time founded by members of the Mattachine Society ("History"). This brief statement in the newsletter indicates the activist tensions within the community in the 1950s. One could argue that the Mattachine Society, while seeking a community for its members, also reinforced what some would call a closeting required by the ongoing cultural discourse framing homosexuality as a problem. While aiming to avoid sensationalism may have been a means of maintaining some sense of respectability, it provided little sense of unification that a movement for social change needs to take hold.

One of the early shifts in approach can be seen in the activism of Frank Kameny's legal action and Congressional testimony on behalf of the Mattachine Society Washington in 1960. Before becoming one of the most well-known gay activists of the 20th century, Kameny sought legal recourse after being fired from his federal job as an astronomer because he was gay. In his important work, *The Lavender Scare*, historian David Johnson reviews Kameny's actions in response to his firing, including his attempts to be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court and his decision to found the Mattachine Society Washington after being denied a legal hearing. Johnson argues that rather than follow the earlier Mattachine aim to create a community of support, "MSW quickly struck out in a new direction. It boldly claimed that homosexuals deserved full American citizenship and that it would speak on their behalf to end the injustices they experience, particularly at the hands of the federal government" (Johnson 184). Clearly, a tactical shift was underway, as Kameny sought policy and legal change, an approach not unexpected in most social movements, but previously unattempted in the Gay Rights Movement. Though Kameny himself was not particularly flamboyant in style or approach and continued to promote rather conservative protest actions, his work with MSW demonstrated the bolder demands of a marginalized community aiming for legal and political justice and the abandonment of the construction of homosexuality as a mental illness or a threat. Though these were audacious views, little progress was seen in these years, as dominant discourses of perversion, danger, and problem persisted. The seemingly slow shift in movement strategies and goals reflects the historical context in which the movement was growing. Understanding the historical context of the 1950s and 1960s for gays and lesbians offers important background for the rhetorical shifts of the 1970s. Recognizing the limited ways that activism was happening in these earlier decades, including the lack of unifying symbols or messages makes the creation and rhetorical successes of the rainbow flag as a material resistance to the persistent marginalization of homosexual people visible as part of a complex and dynamic movement for queer rights.

Shifting Activist Ephemera and Events

While the ongoing alienation of the gay community by dominant forces continued into the 1960s, archival texts associated with homosexuality in this time, including media and legal documents, demonstrates the limits of a movement that was still closeted to create a measure of security. Accordingly, the material ephemera associated with the homosexual community before the 1969 violence at Stonewall reflects the limits on the lives of people and the tactics of those working on behalf of the movement. Largely informative, these materials primarily include DIY newsletters and magazines, particularly associated with The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis as well as other publications independent of homophile organizations. Additionally, a number of archives include ephemera related to specific events and spaces, including flyers from specific bars or other locations and print advertisements. All of this material reminds us that community was being built, but was nascent, restrained from seeking broad approval or engaging in public activities and looking instead to create connection and safe spaces, something of an enclave, often established across distance. In this way, the actions of these homophile groups can be seen as establishing a way of being as a community. My thinking here is influenced by Ahmed's work on phenomenology as "a resource for queer studies insofar as it emphasizes the importance of lived experience, the intentionality of consciousness, the significance of nearness or what is ready-to-hand, and the role of repeated and habitual actions in shaping bodies and worlds" (Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* 2). Considering the lived experience of gays and lesbians in the 1960s, including the ongoing threats from institutionalized forces, I see people creating intentional and private affiliations as aiming to provide a measure of safety and a growing sense of collectivity in a community in which homosexuality was seen as a threat.

The limited surviving ephemeral material from this time reflects the lived reality that required a hard boundary between public and private for gay men and lesbians in the first half of the 20th century. Certainly, for decades, gay men and lesbians used their bodies to disappear in in public, to perform a narrow version of masculinity and femininity that adhered to dominant prescribed notions and provided a measure of security in public spaces. At the same time, in private, in clubs and homes where safety was assured, gay men might be more likely to dress in flamboyant style, to behave and engage others in a more outwardly expressive manner. Lesbian women, likewise, found places where their pants and short hair would not elicit stares or attacks. Queer bodies in the first half of the 20th century, closely policed in public spaces, were well-regulated by dominant cultural norms and by discourses that constructed anyone living beyond the narrow, gendered ideals as perverse, dangerous, and shameful.[24]

Through the 1960s, though public spaces were carefully monitored and policed, individuals became activists of a sort by gathering in private spaces, like bath houses, house parties, and private clubs, where gay men and lesbians could exist in whatever means they felt most comfortable. The 1985 documentary film *Before Stonewall* offers a glimpse into these years, with photographic and video material related to these gatherings. In these spaces, queer affect was not reflective of the anger and outrage often associated with queer identity of the late 1980s AIDS crisis moment. Rather, these everyday activists, men in relatively flamboyant dress and women in pants, performed a kind of resistance simply by gathering in spaces that offered them respite from the legal and cultural boundaries in the public domain. With this private freedom came a level of joy and ease that was not typical for gay men and lesbians in public spaces, even in the most progressive cities in the U.S. I identify these activities as fundamentally activist

[24] Anne Enke's *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* provides a thoughtful study of second-wave feminism, sexuality, and space. For a theoretical discussion of gender and space, see Nancy Duncan's "Renegotiating Gender and Sexuality in Public and Private Spaces" in *BodySpace: Destablising Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*.

since regular police raids invaded some of these spaces, leading to the arrest and public outing of gay and lesbian citizens. In fact, multiple people in *Before Stonewall* spoke of the police backing “paddy wagons up to the door” of bars to arrest everyone there. The threat was extended beyond the moment of arrest as the names of those arrested were published in the newspaper the next day, endangering their privacy and often, their jobs.

These raids, happening in large urban areas as well as smaller cities, often focused on how people were dressed or carrying themselves or simply on the gathering of people in social spaces, seeking to enforce the bodily norms dictated by the culture.[25] Across the country, raids persisted through the 1950s and 1960s, and the contentious, decades-long relationship between the community and the police in New York City found its apex in the Stonewall Riot event of 1969. In their discussion of Stonewall’s place in public memory of Gay Liberation, sociologists Elizabeth Armstrong and Suzanna Crage remind us that activism related to Gay Liberation varied by location, dependent on the larger political atmosphere of a city or the relationship between gay activists and protestors in other movements, like the civil rights or anti-war movements. Given the varied political unrest across the country in the late 1960s, the growing militancy of the gay community in the face of these repeated and continuing raids should not be a surprise. While some public protests, like the White House protest of 1965 or other local events, had occurred

[25] Myriad newspaper reports of these police raids are readily available from newspapers around the country. Additionally, a number of scholars have written about police raids in many parts of the country and their role in the history of Gay Liberation. For a detailed discussion of the laws related to homosexuality in the United States that often underpinned these raids, Eskridge’s *Gaylaw: Challenging the Apartheid of the Closet* (2002) traces the legal issues related to homosexuality in the United States from the 17th century to the end of the 20th century.

throughout the decade, the response to the police raid at The Stonewall Inn in June of 1969 brought a visible shift to the movement, one with lasting importance.

In the public memory, the events of Stonewall at the end of June 1969 are often seen as the instigating moment in the modern Gay Liberation movement. Located on Christopher Street in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City, The Stonewall Inn was a central part of the gay community in the city. Despite its "seedy" nature with a regular clientele of "homeless teens, queens, and others not welcome elsewhere" (Armstrong and Crage 757), The Stonewall Inn was "the most popular gay bar in the nation, the most popular one in Greenwich Village" (Carter, "Stonewall Uprising"). Over the years, like numerous other clubs across the country, Stonewall became not only a gathering place for the gay community, but also a target for police raids aiming to reinforce the criminalization of homosexuality. The long history of police activity, coupled with morning media reports that identified those arrested in the raids, continued to marginalize and terrorize the gay community. In the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, though, the routine raid of the club was met with an active and resistant response. In other raids like this one, patrons not immediately arrested typically left the bar, avoiding confrontation to the extent possible; on this night at Stonewall, a gathering of people remained outside the bar. As tensions increased and police arrested some people, those gathered outside started throwing "bricks, bottles, garbage, pennies and a parking meter at the policemen" ("4 Policemen Hurt in 'Village' Raid"). The active clash between patrons and police lasted for a while that evening and spilled over into subsequent days.

Media reports of this event from the *New York Times* are surprisingly thin, given the current significance of Stonewall in the public imaginary and cultural memory of the Gay Liberation Movement. One brief article from June 30, 1969, focused attention on the injured policemen and the nature of the raid. The article reports that "plainclothes men and detectives confiscated cases of liquor from the bar, which Inspector Pine said was operating without a liquor license" ("4 Policemen Hurt in 'Village' Raid"). Remarkably, given the longstanding practice of raiding gay clubs, the only reference to the gay patrons in this initial report is in the first sentence, where the bar is described as "wellknown [sic] for its homosexual clientele" ("4 Policemen Hurt in 'Village' Raid"). A subsequent article from the *New York Times*, published the next day as the unrest continued, suggested a clearer connection to the role of sexuality. After once again identifying the location as "an inn frequented by homosexuals," the article reports the presence of new protest ephemera: "Graffiti on the boarded-up windows of the inn included: 'Support gay power' and 'Legalize gay bars'" ("Police Again Rout 'Village' Youths"). Clearly, the nature of activism was shifting. While previous protest actions, including a 1965 White House protest, had been orderly and conservative, perhaps aiming at a politics of respectability designed to earn respect, those days were over. The clash at The Stonewall Inn created the sense that this was the start of something new, both for those in New York at the time, and for queer people around the country, as news of the event spread.[26]

[26] While public memory of the event was being constructed almost immediately, Armstrong and Crage report that similar events had occurred both before and after Stonewall in cities in the U.S., so this event, they argue, is not an initiating moment. Instead, the "Stonewall story is better viewed as an *achievement* of gay liberation rather than as a literal account of its origins" (725, emphasis in original). First-hand accounts of Stonewall can be found Martin Duberman's *Stonewall* and David Carter's *Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution*, which report the experiences of people present at the raid.

Pride and the Rise of the Rainbow

Regardless of the scholarly debate around Stonewell's place in the birth of a movement, the active resistance there, particularly following the decades long discourse about homosexuality, contributed to a new discourse and new tactics for those inside the movement. Years of attempts to resist the public association of homosexuality with perversion in order to achieve legal rights and protections had resulted in little progress. After Stonewall and other public moments of resistance, the nature of the movement and direct resistance to the discourse of shame and perversity grew as a sense of collectivity was further established. David Carter, in interviews for the *American Experience* series, asserts that "people who participated in the Stonewall Riots said that through that they found a community, a sense of family, a sense of support. And out of that spontaneously, they formed new organizations" (Carter, "Stonewall Uprising"). The activism of confrontation became more common and visible, taking on the discourse of closeting, shame, and disorder directly by creating the space for political visibility. Pride Parades followed, initially organized as the First Christopher Street Liberation Parade in 1970, a commemoration of the Stonewall Riot. These parades, soon to be held in multiple metropolitan areas and cities across the country, created a visible, public moment in which material ephemera could play an important rhetorical role.

So, while there is legitimate scholarly disagreement about the singular importance of Stonewall to the development of the Gay Liberation Movement, an identifiable shift in movement tactics, affect, and symbols gained momentum in the years after 1970. Though the closeted, enclaved community of the 1950s and 1960s had demonstrated some level of collective enjoyment in their private spaces and community-building via homophile organizations, more cultural work had to be done to lay a foundation for political and legal freedoms. The public nature of the events of Stonewall in 1969 began to make the gay and lesbian community more visible in the United States. Activism that focused on civil rights, women's rights, and anti-war efforts pervaded the cultural landscape in the late-1960s and 1970s and likely helped raise the visibility of the Gay Liberation Movement in this moment as well. Of course, much of the country continued to engage in discourses aiming to shame and alienate homosexuals and anyone who did not publicly conform to normative gender practices; legal rights and protections for members for the LGBTQ community were rare or absent. However, during the 1970s, a number of visible shifts in the Movement occurred, including commemorative parades and events, and more gay-friendly businesses and publications found success. In addition, a few openly gay public figures became more widely known in the 1970s, even being elected to public office in the case of Harvey Milk, while other known activists, like Bella Abzug, publicly supported an expansion of rights and protections for the gay community.

Though some changes in the movement were happening, bringing more visibility and the potential for change, the movement still suffered from the effects of a long-standing association between homosexuality and danger, and lacked a sense of coherence of tactics or symbols. Legal scholar Andrew M. Jacobs argues that the 1970s were an important moment in the movement for legal rights because of the intentional shift toward visibility and the implications of being visible as a group: "Demonstrations or news images that communicate no formal, articulable, cognitive message to an audience can still demonstrate the existence of previously hidden phenomena. Simply put, America had to notice lesbians and gays as a social class before it would talk about or with them as a class" (725). As the country began to see the LGBTQ community, or at least some parts of the community (bisexual and trans people would still be largely invisible), the movement itself shifted toward some level of organization. "Stonewall energized lesbians and gays across the country to spontaneously form political associations" (Jacobs 725-726). While this shift was happening, the disparate nature of movement materials is evident in collections of archival ephemera from the 1970s, which largely focus on information, announcing dates and places for parties or protests, with little in the way of message or visual continuity present.[27]

While other movements were leveraging symbols in their activism, including the fist of Black Power or the peace symbol used in anti-war campaigns, the Gay Community at this time did not yet have a distinct image. In fact, pressed to identify a unifying icon or symbol for the movement during the 1970s, in both early parades and other movement events, most would likely turn to the image of the pink triangle. This symbol, though,

[27] Both digital and material archives hold a number of these ephemeral artifacts. I was able to spend some time with the Gay and Lesbian Collection at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History where I examined a number of these flyers, as well as programs, buttons, and other ephemera. Additionally, digital archives at the New York Public Library, the California Digital Library, the Digital Transgender Archive, as well as a number of others, point to many items. These collections suggest that ephemera from the 1970s, prior to the creation of the first rainbow flag, included icons and symbols that were largely diffuse and somewhat unfocused, aside from the occasional pink triangle. Archival materials after the creation of Baker's flag, though, tend to include a growing number of references to the rainbow, either with the reproduction of flags themselves or simply with stripes of color that reflect the rainbow flag, both in ephemeral protest items and in advertisements associated with Pride events.

as historian Erik N. Jensen explains, was met with mixed responses. While some in the movement were dismayed by attempts to reclaim a symbol so tightly associated with the killing of gay men and lesbians, others aimed to reclaim this symbol of shame and death from Nazi Germany. An archival poster, housed in the LGBT Collection at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC, offers the thinking of those who supported the use of the pink triangle. That poster, a stark, simplistic image of a black triangle above black text on pink cardstock, likely from the 1970s and found in a junk shop in New Orleans,[28] offers the following text, in all caps:

> AS THE NAZI TERROR SWEPT ACROSS EUROPE JEWS WERE REQUIRED TO WEAR A YELLOW STAR. HOMOSEXUALS WERE REQUIRED TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES BY WEARING THE PINK TRIANGLE. TODAY WE ARE AWARE THAT MILLIONS OF JEWS, GYPSIES, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS AND RUSSIANS PERISHED IN THE THIRD REICH'S DEATH CAMPS. YET IT IS LITTLE KNOWN THAT 250,000 MEN AND WOMEN WHO WORE THE PINK TRIANGLE WERE EXECUTED IN NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS BE-TWEEN 1937-1945. THE PINK TRIANGLE HAS BEEN REVIVED AS A MEMORIAL TO OUR HERITAGE, AS A REMINDER THAT OUR STRUGGLE CONTINUES, AND AS A SYMBOL OF OUR DETERMIN-ATION TO NOT LET THIS PART OF HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF.

While the historical record offers indeterminate numbers of homosexuals killed in Nazi Germany, the role of the pink triangle in the system of labeling and killing in Nazi Germany is well-established.[29] The recovering of this symbol as a means of identifying a

[28]After finding this poster in a box of varied ephemera, I gathered this information about the poster, including its likely age and where it was found, from private conversation with a Curator at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. during my research in June 2019.

[29] Among other scholars, Erik N. Jensen (2002) provides an extensive review of the use and associations of the pink triangle during Nazi Germany, considering the role of the symbol in public memory.

community within itself, then, offers an important example of the leveraging of memory. The text of the poster demonstrates that at least some in the Gay Liberation movement were interested in revising a symbol previously used to mark, ostracize, and ultimately kill homosexual individuals. The work to reclaim and revise this symbol reinforces the power of images and memory. While texts like Heinz Heger's memoir of Nazi Germany, *The Men in the Pink Triangles*, initially published in 1972, offer a look into the damage done with that symbol, many in the Gay Liberation movement were using this symbol to call attention to rights and justice issues associated with sexuality. Indeed, scholarship related to the Gay Liberation movement in Germany and North America offers a clearer picture of the use of this symbol. In the U.S., some activists in the 1970s sought to reclaim the symbol from its association with the Holocaust.

The pink triangle remained a significant image for the movement for years, ultimately finding purchase in an oft-used Silence=Death slogan during AIDS awareness events in the late 1980s before being revived after the 2016 shooting at the Orlando gay club, Pulse. However, its use was not without controversy within the queer community. Jensen traces some of the responses to the pink triangle in the 1990s, when some thought it "raised the political consciousness of gays and lesbians" and others found its use offensive, calling up death and potentially minimizing the suffering of Holocaust victims (319). The use of the pink triangle, then, created mixed responses, so that this icon could not provide the kind of unifying rhetorical object that activists in the late 1970s in San Francisco wanted to create.

In fact, while some groups relied on the pink triangle to represent the community, others were actively working to craft a new symbol, eager to rewrite the movement. As the Gay Liberation movement was building, an artist named Gilbert Baker was living and working in the Fremont district of San Francisco and was encouraged by Harvey Milk, activist Cleve Jones, and filmmaker Artie Bressen Jr to create a new symbol, an identifiable image that could offer a unifying message for a growing and complex movement. In his writings about this time, Gilbert Baker, creator of the first Rainbow Flag, reflected on the process of creating what would ultimately serve as a global symbol. Baker was keenly aware of the ongoing discussion around the pink triangle and the role such symbol could play. In his memoir, he recalls the challenge around that symbol, recognizing that "[a]t this point, the pink triangle was the symbol for the gay movement. But it represented a dark chapter in the history of same-sex rights. The pink triangle was used by the Germans to mark homosexuals during World War II in the same way the Star of David was used against Jews. It functioned as a Nazi tool of oppression" (Baker 35). In considering the future of the movement, Baker was working against that existing symbol, one that some in the gay community had been trying to reclaim from its dark past. In his creative process, Baker wanted to find an image that "was positive, that celebrated [their] love" (35). In this way, Baker and others working on Pride planning the California in the late 1970s recognized the rhetorical power of symbols. Given the diffuse nature of ephemera and the spectrum of people who were marginalized by dominant homophobic discourse, the movement needed unification and a resurgence of joy in a community that had long been the victims of violence, persecution, and fear. In this way, Baker's thoughts on the triangle suggest Munoz's "disidentification," as he was aiming to separate queer pride from both the Nazi violence represented by the pink triangle, and a dominant culture that was steeped in the cultural doxa of homosexuality as a threat. Baker wanted to create a symbol that could be unifying for the community and speak to the atmosphere of fear and anxiety that existed both inside and outside the community.

The development of the flag, then, engaged myriad rhetorical aims, many of which Baker affirmed in his writings. Working in downtown San Francisco where significant institutions both civic and commercial used flags to indicate their places in the city, Baker recognized that "…a gay nation should have a flag too, to proclaim its own idea of power" (36). In thinking through the design of the flag, he saw the significance in symbolism and the complexity of a community historically marginalized by dominant governmental and religious forces. Baker recalls this process, asserting that the

> Rainbow Flag was a conscious choice, natural and necessary. The rainbow came from earliest recorded history as a symbol of hope. In the book of Genesis, it appeared as proof of a covenant between God and all living creatures. It was also found in Chinese, Egyptian, and Native American history. A Rainbow Flag would be our modern alternative to the pink triangle. Now the rioters who had claimed their freedom at the Stonewall Inn in 1969 would have their own symbol of liberation. (37)

Rather than rely on recovering a symbol associated with death, Baker sought to create a symbol associated with life and deeply associated with the Christian church, one of the communities most invested in the marginalization of the gay community. Of course, rainbows are not solely in the purview of religious narrative; the presence of literal rainbows creates an association with nature and, often, childhood. The experience of looking for a rainbow in the sky as a symbol of the end of a storm offers a universal connection to both a metaphorical experience and an embodied one. Baker and other activists in San Francisco were relying on these associations to create a compelling connotation for their flag and their movement, a connotation that directly challenged the marginalizing tendency of dominant discourse about homosexuality.

Additionally, the rainbow flag offered a new affective possibility for the movement. Scholars like Benjamin Shepard have studied protest and performance to consider the how the Gay Liberation movement queered activism by infusing a sense of play into the work. In his book *Queer Political Performance and Protest: Play, Pleasure and Social Movement,* Shepard considers six case studies related to the gay liberation and queer movements in the United States since the 1970s. He specifically interrogates the role of joy in these movements, considering the particular connection between joy and the queer community at the same time that he considers how joy may be leveraged in other social movements. In this text, Shepard argues that "By the 1970s, an understanding of the political possibilities of play as a vehicle for pleasure and personal freedom became a cornerstone of movements for sexual liberation. The gay liberation movement made the defense of pleasure a central part of its work. For gay liberationists, pleasure and play were intimately connected with their activism" (10). The rainbow flag, as part of the gay community's pride celebration and protests in San Francisco, materialize that joy and play, particularly in reading Gilbert Baker's memoir and his affective retelling of the community and the sewing of the original flag. In his discussion of the reason for the design, an affinity for playfulness is clear. The rhetorical power of this flag grows not only from its potential to unify a community, but also in its capacity to offer a response of joy to generations of institutional and cultural discourse meant to shame, ostracize, and erase the gay community.

This rhetorical power is evident not only in its effect on the community itself, but also in the way in which Pride events proceeded and were reported. Given the routine use of the rainbow flag in contemporary images of Gay Pride, it is clear that the production and display of the rainbow flag offered the Gay Liberation Movement a means by which to increase their visibility because of its size, its recognizability, and its vibrancy. Sociologists Armstrong and Crage, in their study of the commemorability of Stonewall, argue that “groups with low media access are disadvantaged because media coverage serves as raw material for commemoration” (726). Particularly in the context of the U.S. media market of the 1970s and 1980s, when a handful of large media outlets dominated, visibility and commemoration were connected. The means of reporting any given event both reflected and created a sense of public understanding. In this context, then, the visual vibrancy of the rainbow flag should increase its rhetorical power, as the image carries with it the joy and energy that the movement sought to embody and provides a focus for a media increasingly focused on the visual. While a complete tracing of media reports related to Gay Liberation would take far more space than this chapter allows, I attempted a brief review of some media responses to the movement both before and after the creation of the rainbow flag to consider how its adoption as a central movement symbol may have offered a sense of rhetorical power and visibility.

One means of considering the media response to movements and protests is to assess the magazine covers and significant stories in popular national publications like *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life,* or other mainstream magazines. Each of these general readership publications locate much of their identity in consideration of issues of national (and sometimes international) import, bringing visibility to politics, sports, entertainment, and other topics of broad interest. Given their place in society, these magazines often feature more normative identities, often white men or visions of others through the lens of a white male perspective, but social movements associated with marginalized groups have found their way onto the covers of these publications. More than a dozen covers in the 1970s, for instance, called attention to the Women's Movement in both image and text. Other covers displayed images associated with civil rights, the anti-war movement, and various other political and rights movements. The Gay Liberation Movement, though, was not pictured on these national publications for a while, even as stories about the Gay Liberation Movement began appearing on the inside of national publications, and the images involved took a rather surprising approach, given the vibrancy of movement activities.

Though a movement was not yet visible to mainstream American society, stories focused on the lives of homosexual men and women appeared in these national publications for years, even prior to Stonewall, including a series of articles in *Life* magazine the week of June 26, 1964. The series, titled "Homosexuality in America: A Secret World Grows Open and Bolder," suggests a new kind of visibility, as this issue placed the lives of gay citizens alongside images of the infant Prince Edward from

England, a crash at the Indianapolis race, and several dinner recipes. Part of a series in this issue, one article, titled “The ‘Gay’ World Takes to City Streets,” would seem to suggest a focus on some sort of movement. However, the content of the article continues the narrative of “problems,” describing the social scene for homosexuals (with a focus on the “frantic” nature of the “pickup” scene), and the many limitations on gay life, including lack of acceptance, bans from the military, and general attitude of distrust among the non-homosexual community (Welch 75). While articles like this suggest some level of growing visibility, the continued focus on the challenges and threats, including the ongoing legal issues facing homosexuals as they faced arrest regularly, reminds us that the visibility, pre-Gay Liberation and the development of the rainbow flag, was still firmly positioned as a danger to the broader, heterosexual community.

Visibility continued to increase in the later years of the 1960s, and images of homosexuality slowly came to be more common. For instance, in the week of Oct 31, 1969, *Time* ran a cover story on “The Homosexual in America.” That this story was accompanied by a cover image seems to be a positive shift. However, this image subtly continues the narrow understanding of homosexuality, picturing the head of a single white man, in colorful pop art style, with a black silhouette superimposed on the colorful image (see figure 19). The cover suggests a mental struggle with the image of a single person shown in silhouette.

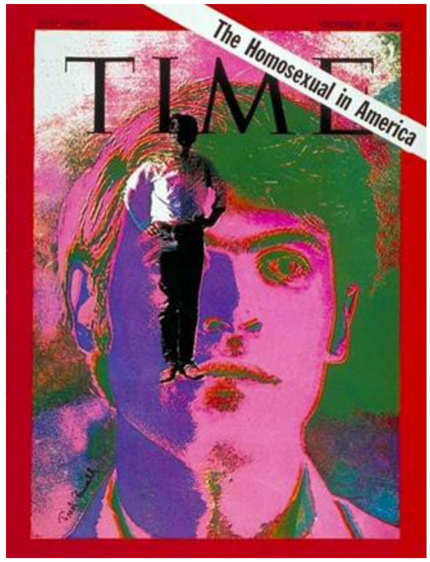

Figure 19. *Time* Magazine Cover, October 31, 1969

With head down, hands on hips, the man is alone, isolated from any community. The figure certainly does not indicate any sort of social movement. Given the context of a moment when homosexuality was still classified as a disorder by psychiatric experts, the suggestion is not surprising. So, while a measure of visibility here suggests some progress, this image seems to continue to focus on homosexual individuals, not as part of a movement or even as part of a relationship, but as isolated and troubled.

During the 1970s and 1980s, years after Stonewall and during the years when the Gay Liberation movement was growing more active and organized, the visibility of the community continued to grow, although the movement was still less visible. Given the now ubiquitous nature of the association between rainbows and queer rights, I expected to find at least a few examples of mainstream national publications depicting the flag or rainbow colors on their covers. However, I struggled to find even a few in the 20th century. While many national commercial periodicals ran stories about the LGBTQIA community, the covers rarely indicated any focus on the movement as such. Instead, covers often continued to show individuals or parts of individuals, as in the 1979 cover of *Time.* This image (figure 20) may suggest relationship with two sets of hands clasped over a title which asks "How Gay is Gay?" but ignores the presence of a movement.

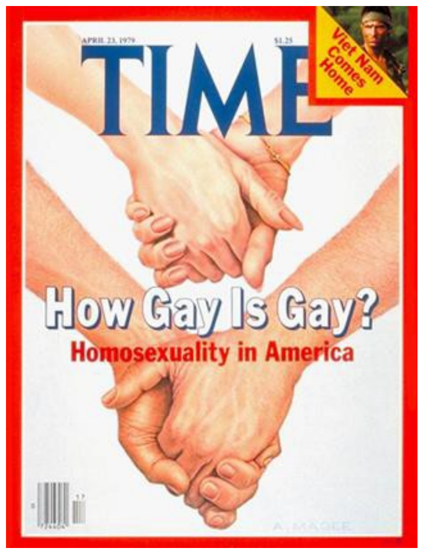

Figure 20. *Time* Magazine Cover, April 23, 1979.

Another example is the *Newsweek* cover from June 21, 1993, showing two women standing together under the title "Lesbians" (see figure 21). Though there is progress to be seen in the presence of two people pictured together in a way that suggests relationship, again there is little to indicate any relationship to a larger movement for civil rights. Additionally, the second headline, asking about the "limits of tolerance," indicates that the progress suggested by the image continues to be limited, implying a continuing need for the movement that is absent in the image.

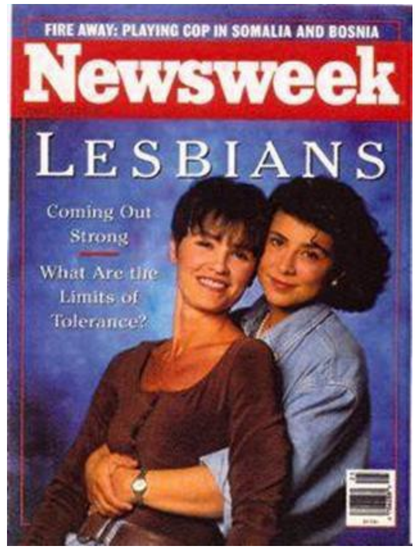

Figure 21. Cover of *Newsweek,* June 21, 1993

Each of these covers, alongside several others, demonstrates that even as the LGBTQIA community was finding some measure of visibility in the United States in the 25 years following Stonewall, much of that visibility was narrowly constructed around white individuals or, in some cases, couples. The movement itself, though more visible (often alongside rainbow imagery) in gay media, is largely invisible from an image perspective in these mainstream national publications, even when stories inside the magazines discuss the activism or political activities of organizations and individuals. In fact, visibility of members of the LGBTQ community is still limited, largely focused on celebrity or infamous individuals.

In the last ten years, though, when the LGBTQIA community is suggested or visible on a national magazine cover, the image often includes or centers rainbows, sometimes in an overt way and other times more subdued. The symbol has become a stand-in for the movement itself. One of the most significant examples of this is the 2012 *Newsweek* cover proclaiming Barack Obama "The First Gay President" (see figure 22).

Figure 22. Cover of *Newsweek,* May 2012.

Referencing Obama's support of same-sex marriage, the image shows then President Obama gazing off into the distance with a gleaming rainbow halo hovering over his head. In this way, the rainbow becomes the indicator of the movement. So, while the image of the rainbow flag seems to have taken some time to become ingrained in the public consciousness in the United States, by the 2010s, the symbol has gained so much traction that the flag is no longer required. Instead, the colors are enough to do the rhetorical work of aligning the man with the movement, and the intersection of religious imagery in the form of the halo with the rainbow speaks to the view of the movement offered by the text. Additionally, we may see this cover as evidence of the success of a movement, with a protest symbol of a marginalized group being associated with the seat of power in the United States.

Another example comes from the cover of the May 2016 issue of *Time* with a focus on the issue of transgender rights and gender-neutral bathrooms. This cover identifies the issue at stake in the "battle" by making the rainbow central (see figure 23).

Figure 23. Cover of *Time* Magazine, May 2016

Again, the use of the rainbow colors, this time on rolls of toilet tissue, does the rhetorical work of calling up decades of political activism, with no indication of the people affected by this issue. This deconstructing of the flag and the persistence of the rainbow as a queer symbol offers a number of interpretations. While some celebrate the power of the rainbow colors to evoke an entire community, others may read the image as evidence of the deconstruction not only of the symbol but also the thinning of its power to recall a community. When the colors are disassociated with the people of the community who created and recirculated it, the danger of erasure of a community is highlighted, pointing to the risks associated with creating a durable protest symbol designed for a community.

Rhetorical Resonances and Risks

As discussed, the creation and proliferation of the rainbow flag as associated with the movement for inclusion of LGBTQIA individuals in all aspects of life in the United States offered a significant opportunity for identification and visibility for a group once expected to be invisible. Even as Gilbert Baker wanted to create a flag to represent both joy and power, the rainbow flag has offered rhetorical identification that has coalesced a community. Additionally, over time the flag has provided greater visibility, along with the possibility of connection, support, and inclusion. If we consider the flag from a 21st century perspective, we can see more clearly that the circulation of that flag demonstrates the significant success of this symbol as visual rhetoric—communicating and providing noteworthy "rhetorical velocity" as discussed by Ridolfo and DeVoss. From a single flag produced to display in the 1978 San Francisco Pride celebration to the branding of a movement, few other protest symbols have offered the kind of tightly-knitted association that so deftly counters the previous cultural doxa, in this case, an association with disorder, perversity, and deviation. The community called for by Baker's design and production of that first flag is today reproduced with each new pride parade, as individuals knit a community together with this symbol that has become so pervasive.

Much of the re-mixing of the flag that has occurred for pride celebrations, from balloons and protest signs to t-shirts and tattoos, demonstrates the point that Ridolfo and DeVoss make concerning the collaboration of artists, particularly in the digital age.

Rainbows litter the streets after a Pride event, leaving a material, if ephemeral trail of the movement. These items at some point were connected to a body and, in the space of a parade, to a cause. Like other protest images that have gone digital, the spread of rainbow flags emojis has extended the movement to a broader context.

Figure 24. Google Version of Rainbow Flag Emoji, Created in 2016

While emojis have been a regular part of digital discourse for longer, the inclusion of the rainbow flag as an emoji in 2016 ("Rainbow Flag Emoji") created another opportunity for individual identification with the LGBTQIA movement with little other investment, opening the possibility of even greater circulation of movement ideas. Of course, as more individuals have been able to produce and project that image, the sense of the community has grown. The rainbow has become virtually synonymous with inclusion and pride, even in the absence of other language or iconography. However, with this rhetorical velocity comes a danger for the movement; as the symbol moves from the context of a protest to the realm of celebration, the implicit suggestion is that protest is no longer needed. The ubiquity of celebration can bolster the dangerous assumption that the movement has won and that we live in a world where liberation, equality, and inclusion reign. Given the ongoing threats to the queer community, including high rates of violence against queer and trans folks, that assumption is dangerous, not only to a movement, but to people.

In a neoliberal context, of course, the rhetorical success and broad use of the rainbow symbol can bring other pressures as well. Specifically, alongside the benefits of a growing ability to create, replicate, and publish or project this symbol comes the threat of corporate appropriation of the rainbow flag and the queer community it signifies.[30] For many, both inside and outside the LGBTQIA community, the rainbow has become a problematic symbol in recent years. In considering how the rainbow flag functions as an arm of a corporate culture that uses it or references to it to achieve its commercial aims rather that to support queer people, I turn to queer theorist and gender scholar Jasbir K. Puar. In her study of the connections between identity markers, including gender, race, sexuality among others, and the "tactics, strategies, and logistics of war machines," (xi) Puar offers a means for considering what she calls "queer subjecthood" (xii) that works to reify nationalism and narrow national ideals that may simply re-create the kinds of separation and marginalization that the Gay Liberation and Gay Rights movements have long sought to challenge. Puar's work suggests that narratives of homonationalism, which she finds in travel narratives, pop culture references, and other sites of analysis, creates a strong assertion that particular notions of homosexuality are acceptable, specifically in that they work to maintain the power of capitalism. In much the same way, contemporary

[30] I am certainly not alone in raising concerns about the consumer co-option of Pride. National newspapers and other media outlets like *Vox* (Santos), *Forbes* (Hessekiel), and *Wired* ("The Problem with the Rainbow-Washing of LGBTQ+ and Pride") in addition to gay and lesbian media outlets have published regular articles about the commodification of Pride and the creation of a brand for the movement. My assessment goes beyond the concerns of the commodification of a movement to the consideration of how this commodification serves national and consumer aims to the detriment of the queer community.

appropriations of the celebration of Pride or the rainbow flag image/icon may appear to be a way to broaden the spectrum of who may “naturally” exist in accepted commercial spaces, but actually tend to revise notions of queerness in service to an acceptable homosexual norm. By co-opting the symbols of gay liberation, commercial enterprises reinforce the centrality of capitalist principles of conspicuous consumption with little concern for the dignity and visibility of queer people.

To consider one of a vast number of options, I turn to one of the largest consumer retail businesses in the United States. Like myriad retail operations, the omnipresent commercial giant Target embraces Pride as part of their enterprise, with an entire line of products, from clothing to shampoo, that carry the rainbow flag alongside slogans of inclusivity. Particularly during the summer months when pride celebrations occur in hundreds of communities across the country, the ubiquity of the rainbow becomes obvious. On the Target website, and in its stores, this queer inclusivity happens within the narrow confines of a commercial enterprise that reinforces happiness and equality as part of a larger consumer culture. The rainbow, then, offers an easy means of appropriating Pride for commercial profit while requiring little in the way of true revision of its commercial gendering practices or questioning of the consumer impulse. Items of clothing bearing rainbows are often presented in images or on displays that reside in the aisles between the gendered clothing sections of stores, suggesting a gender-neutral stance. Similarly, other products, like shampoo or pins, are pictured without relation to bodies at all. In this way, Target can use the rainbow to suggest its focus on inclusivity while avoiding association with the bodies of the people in the movement themselves.

When there is an image of a person in this commercial world, the visuals accompanying the Pride line of products appear to narrow the spectrum of queer lives. First, individuals in these images tend to appear singularly, suggesting a distancing from homosexual relationship, even as the Pride association suggest inclusion and community. This individual focus reinforces the primary identification of the person as consumer or otherwise primarily in relationship to the commercial enterprise. The main Target Pride page, indicated in figure 25, offers an example.

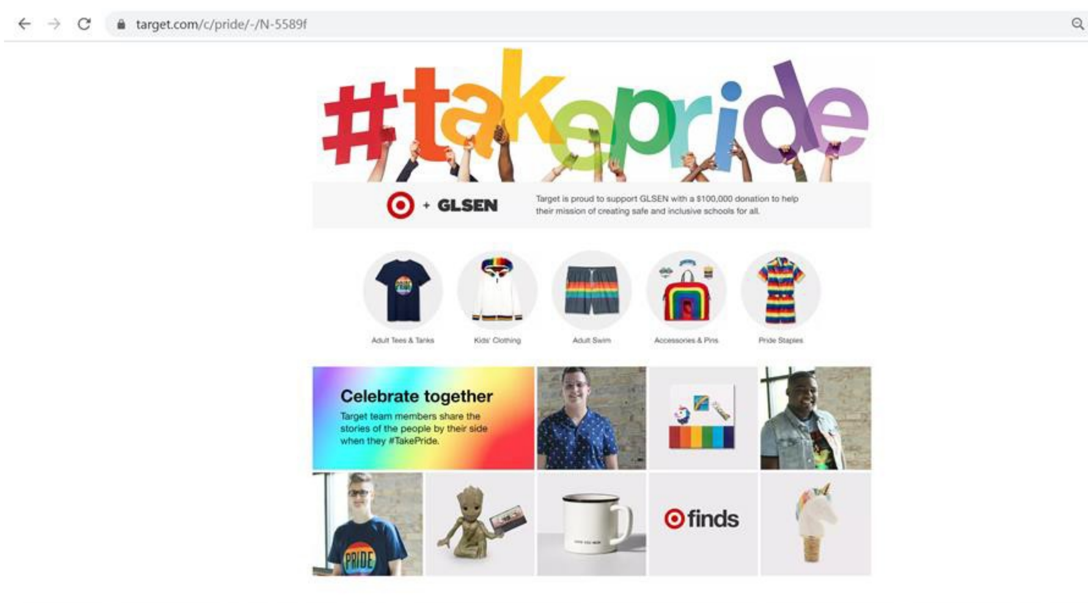

Figure 25. Screenshot of Target #takepride Landing Page, 2019

On this page, the rainbow is obvious, first in the hashtag heading on the page and then in the details of products indicated for sale. The people on this landing page are all shown singularly, so the only relationship connection apparent in these images is that of employee to coworker or product. The “Celebrate Together” link offers more specific stories, as individuals who identify as members of the LGBTQIA community and Target employees offer comments about the "family" of people they work with and their acceptance of them. Those stories may offer more personalized narratives, with images of personal relationships provided, but they are only accessible with multiple clicks. Target, then, gets to embrace pride using pervasive images of rainbows but without associating itself and its brand with sexually-intimate homosexual or queer relationships.

Additionally, Target's normative vision of LGBTQ inclusion appears to ignore class and ability issues. Because these images accompany a commercial enterprise aimed at consumption, any notion of poverty or economic struggle is erased, along with any visible indications of limitations in ability. Following Puar's line of thinking, I argue that the rainbow specifically allows corporations like Target to define a sort of homocommercial normativity as asexual, middle-class, and able-bodied. In this way, large corporate interests, like Target, prove the rhetorical power of the rainbow to allow for a profitable identification with the Gay Rights Movement. In the case of Target, this adoption of a brand as part of its commercial activity is at least accompanied by what appears to be corporate for equality. Over the last few years, Target has made public its support for legislation like the Equality Act and has partnered with organizations whose primary commitments are to the LGBTQIA community. While the selling a particular vision of queerness via Target's marketing using the rainbow in its branding is questionable, at least their corporate support seems in line with the priorities of the movement.

However, the commercialization of the rainbow is not always situated in a context this consistent. For example, Alex Abad-Santos reports for *Vox* that numerous corporate entities have leveraged pride for their own economic bottom line while selling out the community from which Pride was born. Abad-Santos point specifically to Adidas' marketing of Pride merchandise while simultaneously sponsoring the World Cup in Russia, a country known for its strict "anti-LGBTQ laws that make it unsafe for fans and athletes." Of course, Target and Adidas are only two massive corporations among many who market the activism of LGBTQIA groups for profit. The challenge for an ongoing LGBTQIA movement designed to highlight and embrace the spectrum of lived experiences in the U.S in the context of a strongly capitalistic society is multifaceted. While clear progress has been made to undo the old notions of homosexuality as dangerous, including significantly increased acceptance of and expanded rights for LGBTQIA people, the commercial leveraging of pride and the rainbow continues to threaten a lasting sense of equity and justice for members of the LGBTQIA community. At the same time that the movement can be narrowed and offered up for sale at any neighborhood discount store or as part of a corporate brand, the ongoing suffering of some members (or all) of the LGBTQIA community can be minimized or dismissed as exceptional.

While the creation and production of the rainbow flag offered an important response to decades of dominant narratives about the LGBTQIA community, the corporate cooptation of the symbol, then, serves to elide ongoing marginalization by emphasizing the consumer relationships and possibilities. So, in 2019, at the same time that the White House issues memos banning the flying of the pride flag on U.S. embassies, corporate entities can sell the notion of pride as indicative of achievement of a "happy family." Much like the use of ribbons and sashes in the Suffrage Movement and the fist in Black Power, the rainbow flag is an adaptable and powerful rhetorical means of responding to and resisting existing cultural doxa about marginalized bodies. The production and use of the rainbow flag was a powerful rhetorical move in the late 1970s, as it spoke directly to the long-standing discriminatory beliefs about LGBTQIA individuals in the United States and assisted the creation of a collectivity aiming to exert political power. Because of its rhetorical power and the ability to create more rhetors in a growing community, this symbol has demonstrated great rhetorical and cultural power. The predominance of examples and the myriad public responses to these rainbows seem to support an understanding of the rhetorical power and adaptability of the symbol. Similarly, the ongoing and rampant reproduction and circulation of the symbol demonstrates its power in establishing a durable sense of pride and joy in the LGBTQIA. Much as the public memorialization of the fist has attenuated the power and agency present for Smith and Carlos in 1968, the commercialization of the rainbow demonstrates the powerful force of capitalism on the agency of marginalized groups in a system designed to water down the power of those groups.

My analysis leads me to underscore both the significant rhetorical power of the rainbow flag (as a tool for identification with a community and a means of shifting the affect of the movement to joy) and the danger of commodification of that very identity. Clearly digital tools and the marketing of ephemeral goods displaying the rainbow flag offer significant possibilities for allowing more people to become active agents in a group, either by creating or circulating their own digital flags or by buying, wearing, or otherwise displaying mass-produced gear associated with pride. From the perspective of circulation and distribution of an idea associated with a social movement, this seems like a clear rhetorical win. However, as those individuals are able to produce narratives that may contradict the aims of the Gay Rights movement and Pride or as those corporations are able to side-step or erase the lived experiences of queer people, this potential creates new challenges to a movement continuing to seek access to full rights, particularly in the areas of employment practices and access to services. Many want to see U.S. culture post-Obergefell v. Hodges, when the White House itself was covered in a rainbow of lights (see figure 26), as the utopia often associated with life over the rainbow, an image of victory for the movement.

Figure 26. ABC News Photo of the White House Covered in Rainbow Lights, July 26, 2015.

However, the continuing battles for employment security, parental rights, and freedom for discrimination suggests that there is still work to do. Material objects like the rainbow flag may provide significant rhetorical effects for a social movement, but the complexities of cultural change in the context of a deeply entrenched marginalization of queer people must rely on a combination of rhetorical tactics, including visual and material objects, to be sure, as well as careful consideration of the effects of the circulation and reproduction of these objects.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

> We *have* had huge impacts. We have changed what constitutes what's acceptable and ordinary in innumerable ways. You can tell the story of same-sex marriages, oh, the Supreme Court in its beneficence handed this nice thing down to us, but the Supreme Court decided that this was normal because millions of people had transformed our society in powerful ways over decades about what was normal, and so they did what seemed reasonable, but we defined what reasonable is. —Rebecca Solnit, in an interview for *On the Media*

As I marched with thousands of other people in Washington, D.C. in 2017, I was filled with a burgeoning sense of hope. The previous months had foregrounded the ongoing ways that women endure patriarchal systems. When the first woman nominated to run for President by a major political party in the U.S. faced chants of "Lock her up!" in public venues and suffered the accusation of "nasty woman" from her opponent, many voters were dismayed. When that same woman won the popular vote but lost the election, the feeling of distress was evident. When throngs of people took to the streets globally for the Women's March to speak out against the sexism that the 2016 election highlighted, the event felt hopeful. Driving home at the end of the day, I felt energized and optimistic about change.

This project began with me thinking about how marginalized people resist cultural narratives that constrain their lives. When Donald Trump was elected President on November 8, 2016, a collective gasp reverberated across the country. While partially related to the surprise victory, given the popular polls and predictions of pundits, the visceral public response was perhaps also the reflection of many Americans' responses to Trump's attitude toward and public statements about women, minorities, immigrants, and other marginalized groups in this country. Both during his campaign and even more so during his presidency, Trump has reinforced his tendency to ignore the marginalized, or worse, to incite violence against them (or enact violence against them in the case of asylum-seekers and undocumented immigrants) as he has, over and over again, asserted the importance and dominance of white, wealthy, heterosexual men and their interests.

So, here we are, three years on, with few concrete changes to point to. In fact, on some fronts, not much has changed at all, despite the resistance represented by the Women's March. Donald Trump continues his confrontational approach, often aimed particularly at women and people of color. His speeches, executive orders, and tweets have demonstrated little in the way of a shift toward respect or inclusion of these groups. In fact, the level of vitriol in the country at large seems to have grown in the last three years, not lessened.[31] All of this call to mind the question of how change happens in a social movement. At this point, as I draw to a close this dissertation project focused on historical social movements that aimed for change and found some success, I am reminded that the scholarly work of analyzing social movements continues to be important, and I hope the conclusions that I have drawn from this project can offer useful

[31] Many articles over the last several years have pointed to the ongoing vitriol in the political landscape of the United States. One recent example is Adam Serwer's "Civility is Overrated" from *The Atlantic* in December 2019.

ideas to extend this work. Groups continue to work for change, for a sense of justice and equity, and this project points toward a way to think about the roles of objects and marginalized people in that work.

This dissertation draws attention to the ways that ephemeral and embodied protest actions offer marginalized groups an opportunity to amplify their message and resist cultural narratives that contribute to their marginalization. In this way, this project seeks to investigate the ecology that exists around protest, aiming to understand what Gries calls "The last three principles—vitality, agency, and virality [to adopt] an ecological disposition toward things that acknowledges their vital, transformative, and often contagious characteristics" (xvi). While this project highlights the diffuse nature of movements and the assemblage of objects and bodies within movements, the cases here underscore the "contagious characteristics" of these protest assemblages by considering the durability that can follow these ephemeral moments as a result of various circulatory possibilities. While each of the cases highlighted here are distinct, some commonalities emerge from this dissertation.

Ephemeral Objects Support Agency and Exert Rhetorical Force

The studies provided in this dissertation take up a variety of movements and wide-ranging ephemera but come to a common conclusion that these ephemera exert power and generate rhetorical agency in protests, particularly in assemblages with marginalized bodies. Each of these case studies demonstrate how marginalized groups suffer the normativity of institutionalized political systems, making their need to resist that normativity central to their developing rhetorical and political agency. Specifically, many groups representing people outside systems of power in a culture enact their protest using these ephemera in concert with their bodies. This assemblage of bodies and objects or performances speaks back directly to challenge long-standing narratives or cultural doxa, ideologies that often center on constraints for those marginalized bodies.

As the cases in this dissertation demonstrate, marginalization is experienced by people in embodied ways and accordingly, their resistance is often embodied. Whether this means experiencing limited physical freedom, systemic policing of their bodies, or violence against their bodies, people who do not fit the normative image of citizen—white, male, Christian, heterosexual, and able-bodied—often experience their marginalization through their bodies. This marginalization both grows from and reinforces cultural doxa that drive dominant narratives about groups. As a result, scholars of social movement rhetoric consider the ways that activists might subvert doxa that construct particular identities as narrowly confined to one set of associations, largely ones that isolate those identities from the political and legal agency that they seek access to.

This project highlights the fact that protest gains attention and creates endurance when it doesn't ignore popular discourse, but instead when it engages that discourse. By taking on the main ideas of a public discourse designed to marginalize, a group can enact rhetorical and cultural power to take control of the conversation through the disruption of protest. This conclusion can be useful both for activists and for research related to social movements, as a way to focus the work. Just as Nedra Reynolds argues that "[i]nterruption…offers a tactical, practical means toward discursive agency" (70-71), so does disruption through protest become a means toward rhetorical agency for activists. As the ephemera used in these protest acts recirculate and become durable and associated with the movement, they exert force themselves, extending agency to the group an eventually calling up the idea of the collective in the absence of masses of bodies. When enough people associate an object or symbol with a group, then the object suggests the larger assembly on its own, gathering rhetorical force on its own. Jenny Edbauer, in her study of the "Keep Austin Weird" campaign, says, "[n]ot only do these counter-rhetorics directly respond to and resist the original exigence, they also expand the lived experience of the original rhetorics by *adding* to them—even while changing and expanding their shape" (19). Activists then enact this agency by resisting and sometimes adding to the cultural doxa, creating something new in the process, and the assemblage of objects with bodies contributes to the possibility of this cultural change.

Circulation Extends Time

Each of the case studies in this dissertation, as I said in the introduction, offer established histories, existing archives of public documentation, notable public events, and identifiable protest memorabilia and ephemera which I could turn to for study. Because these were all historical movements, though they each are related to ongoing contemporary movements that may claim relationship to these past activities, the relative success of their activism is known. Women did indeed gain the right to vote in the United States. While systemic racism is still rampant, conditions for people of color have improved in some ways, as Jim Crow laws have been eradicated. Queer people have more rights in today's world, including the right to live and love openly, to marry and to have improved labor protections. Each of these groups would argue that there is more work to be done as discrimination and systemic marginalization persists, but the specific aims of the movements in this project found some measure of success.

However, the critical element of time cannot be overlooked. Each of these movements happened over the course of decades. Women wearing yellow ribbons to events supporting suffrage dates back to 1867, with the enormous March on Washington happening in 1913, yet women's suffrage did not become law until 1920. After generations of people fought white supremacy and racism, the Black Power Movement started in the 1960s and made some progress, but still has work to do to mitigate ongoing racism in education, workplaces, and legal structures. Following decades of violence against queer people, the Gay Rights movement was born of resistance in the 1970s and was aided by the development of the rainbow flag in 1978, but marriage between same sex couples only became legal nationally in 2015. All of these movements require time. This is the reason that, though much remains the same three years after the Women's March, hope still persists among activists. The central importance of time in social change also leads to my conclusion about the significance of the assemblage of bodies and objects at the center of this study.

As a result of the study of these three movements, a practical conclusion arises about how the assemblage of bodies and objects and the rhetorical force of those entanglements extends the temporal nature, and thus the likelihood of success, of social protest. Because the reenactment/circulation of these protest objects and moments often happens outside of the ephemeral collective protest moment, it contributes to the growth and durability of the event itself and to the agency and effectiveness of the collective which the object suggests. The initial public moment, once singular and bounded, becomes commonplace and eventually habitual through the use of or display of an object or icon. At this point, the potential to make longer lasting change, like gaining the right to vote or undoing the remnants of Jim Crow, or seeking greater visibility and access to rights for the queer community, grows significantly. When the activism is limited to temporally bound acts of protest, like a march or a boycott or a parade, the larger public can more easily avoid or dismiss the movement. When these movements become part of an everyday way of being, wearing a ribbon or a shirt or some other object that calls up the movement for instance, then the possibility for rhetorical agency, a shifting of cultural narratives, and ultimately legal and political change becomes more long lasting. The assemblage of bodies and objects create, then, the possibility for durability, a kind of extension of time.

Consequently, while initial responses to spectacular (and temporally bounded) ephemeral embodied performances may be aggressive, demoralizing, or sometimes dangerous, these actions can have more significant long-term rhetorical effects because of their ability to amplify and circulate counterpublic messages from the marginalized groups to the larger power structures (be they legal, political, or cultural) that they wish to reach. The ephemera play a central role in this communication and in the persistence of a message over time. These efforts, then, demonstrate the rhetorical significance of individualized bodies and material ephemeral in assemblage as social movement rhetoric, offering increased circulatory possibilities and thus, greater durability.

Rhetorical Assemblage Creates Benefits and Risks for Social Movements

The final conclusion that this work leads me to involves both the benefits and the potentially problematic effects of significant durability and circulation. In each of these cases, the ephemera being used is adopted by broader groups for a variety of purposes. In contemporary society, wearing a ribbon to suggest support for a social cause has become virtually cliché, with dozens of colors of ribbons signifying a variety of causes, perhaps most notably the pink ribbon associated with breast cancer.[32] While the colors shift sometimes, as movements wax and wane, for years now, the wearing of a small piece of ribbon on one's chest, even in formal moments, can signal a kind of association or allyship in the contemporary world. Similarly, the use of a raised fist is now pervasive in social movements of all kinds, both progressive and conservative, as discussed in Chapter 3. Both in terms of the embodied action of raising the fist of solidarity in a public gathering and the merging of the fist icon with other protest symbols, the fist has become virtually a generic symbol for resistance and protest in many spaces. Additionally, contemporary movements sometimes remix the fist, combining it with other symbols, for example the feminist fist, which can be found in various colors and with differing details, but which uniformly combines the raised fist with the symbol for woman, threatening to attenuate the connection to Black Power. Of course, the rainbow flag has been commercialized extensively, as discussed in chapter 4, sometimes distancing itself completely from the social movement which initially used it in protest.

[32] Many organizations call attention to their chosen color for an awareness ribbon. Collected guides to understanding what color is associated with what cause can be found online at various sites, including https://www.personalizedcause.com/awareness-ribbon-meanings .

The pervasive use of a symbol could signal its effectiveness in becoming an embedded part of the culture. In this positive view, the broadening use and acceptance of these icons or symbols can help create a kind of remixing of symbols that in its best form offers coalitional possibilities, as groups appear to cooperate in justice movements. Indeed, this use of symbol can also work to create coalitional connections between movements, seeking what Amy L. Brandzel calls a "politics of alliance" to "dismantle the heteronormative, whitenormative, and colonialnormative structure of U.S. culture and politics" (4). Any extent to which movements can leverage icons, symbols, and actions into intersectional rhetorical tactics can increase potential for coalitional activity.

In its worst, form, though, this remixing can become appropriation for entirely distinct purposes from the movement which created the icon. In this way, when the assemblage is broken, the object may take on new meaning, and often that meaning is rooted in economic, political, or ideological work that can diverge from the intent offered by the initial ephemeral use of it. Indeed, this appropriation can be a significant risk for the movement involved, particularly when the icon is co-opted by powerful institutions or ideologies that (intentionally or not) may re-marginalize the group, as in the examples discussed in the chapters. Considering the distinct effect of assemblage of the bodies and objects in these cases may offer a lens through which to consider protest assemblage in other movements and contexts. This project, then, offers conclusions that point to the rhetorical force, both productive and counterproductive from the movement's perspective, of protest ephemera, particularly related to the assemblage of bodies and objects.

Implications and Possibilities for Future Work

The work of resistant embodied action is still required in a world where inequities, injustice, and suffering continue, and so scholarship aiming to make sense of how social change occurs must also continue. Regardless of the origins of a movement or the trajectory of development of an organization, the fact remains that social movements are as active now as at any time in our nation's history. Many of these movements and organizations are specifically engaged with the needs and concerns of marginalized groups in the United States, especially given the growing gaps in wealth, income, and access to institutional power. However, the approach of tracing the effect of body-object assemblages in social movements could certainly be applied to other historical movements and could be useful in any national context, and with movements associated with a number of frames—from justice frames to rights frames to environmental frames. Scholars of social movements, then, have a plethora of possible options to research, explore, and understand both the rhetorical strategies and tactics and their relative effectiveness within these movements and organizations. From the perspective of rhetorical scholarship, much of this work, of course, will be focused on discrete rhetorical events or actions, as we consider the ways these events or actions intervene on the knowledge making and policy-making actions of this moment. I aspire to contribute to these conversations with the work represented in this dissertation, and I anticipate this work can be extended in a number of possible ways. Specifically, I am interested in posing similar questions about the assemblage of bodies and objects in movements designed to sustain the status quo or to reinforce dominant paradigms. I aim to trace the circulation, durability, and rhetorical effect of these assemblages in other movements, seeking to understand the negotiations of power that accompany them.

Secondly, future scholarship extending this work may find traction in the study of contemporary protest ephemera. Ephemera today takes on increasingly diverse forms, and the work of tracing these ephemeral objects is fraught, given the variety of ephemera, including signs, wearable items (like hats, t-shirts, and buttons), graffiti and street art, digital texts, and other genres. The current culture of DIY rhetorics offers more potential subject matter, including the ongoing focus on zines, homemade stickers, yarn-bombing, and other culture jamming practices. The work of tracing this material, including the rhizomatic ways that they often circulate, could proceed with multiple aims, including historicizing the origins of that ephemera or considering the ways in which the digital circulation increases the viral potential for protest ephemera. In this way, work that takes on digital tracing of protest ephemera would extend this dissertation to consider "the ways in which rhetorical processes operate in a viral culture" (Edbauer 13). While I aimed to gesture to the potential for digital circulation in these chapters, a full investigation would certainly involve greater attention to the digital circulation practices and virality at play. Recent scholarship on the rhetorical work of hashtags, including Edwards and Lang's look at #YesAllWomen and Sarah Florini's recent book *Beyond Hashtags: Racial Politics and Black Digital Networks* demonstrate the rich potential for work considering the intersection of digital culture and politics. In addition to a growing body of scholarship focused on the rhetoric of hashtags and other digital genres, more digital and material archives of protest ephemera, including ones housing material from the 2017 Women's March, have been opened, offering more research possibilities situated in the contemporary moment.

If we knew, finally and fully, how social change happened, we would no longer need scholarship of social change. But suffering persists. We need more scholarship to understand how change happens, how groups push toward justice, and how governing paradigms maintain dominance. What can happen to shift the social order? It did shift in these moments—what was the contribution of the assemblage of bodies and objects? In the last few weeks, as I have finished this project, we have witnessed one of the most significant shifts in the social order in our lifetimes, the outbreak of a pandemic virus. In the midst of this unprecedented social shift, many have become more attuned to the inequities in our society, the varying degrees to which people's lives can be disrupted by a stay-at-home order, the tenuousness of the economy, the challenges of equitable access to healthcare. We have also seen an increase in anti-Asian violence and vitriol and continuing political division surrounding response plans. This dissertation project, while offering few answers to the current questions facing the world during the pandemic, has offered me a sense of hope. I recently read an interview with Rebecca Solnit, author of *Hope in the Dark*, where she wrote,

> There are times when it seems as though not only the future but the present is dark: few recognize what a radically transformed world we live in, one that has been transformed not only by such nightmares as global warming and global capital but by dreams of freedom, of justice, and transformed by things we could not have dreamed of. We adjust to changes without measuring them; we forget how much the culture changed. (Solnit, *Hope in the Dark*, 1-2)

Practically, scholarship that asks us to turn a critical eye on the past can help us navigate the present. While I find it disappointing to look back three years, to my time at the Women's March, and then to now, when so much seems dark and so little seems to have changed, I am grateful to have spent this time on this project, reminding myself that the path to change is long and winding. None of the activists whose work is considered in these chapters saw quick and easy resolution to the social problems they aimed to change; yet, change still occurred. Having completed this dissertation, I now have a greater understanding of how social change happens and of the ways ephemeral moments can become durable. I also have a growing sense of how much progress can be accomplished when people, things, times, and places align and seek change.

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